

MEN. AND

IDEAS

Essays

by Graham Wallas

THE LIFE OF FRANCIS PLACE

OUR SOCIAL HERITAGE

WILLIAM JOHNSON FOX

SOCIAL JUDGMENT

*(George Allen & Unwin)*

GREAT SOCIETY

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

*(Macmillan)*

ART OF THOUGHT

*(Cape)*

HUMAN NATURE IN POLITICS

*(Constable)*

JEREMY BENTHAM

AND WORD CREATION

*(Oxford University Press)*

# MEN AND IDEAS

Essays by  
GRAHAM  
WALLAS

With a Preface by  
Gilbert Murray

London

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WOKING

## GRAHAM WALLAS

by Gilbert Murray

ENGLISHMEN OF MY AGE, who have lived half their lives or more in a world where the civilized nations seemed permanently at peace or only at times ruffled by waves of obsolescent enmities, often feel, as they look back, rather like our first parents, shut out from the Eden that they knew and astray in a world that is foreign to them. When we try to go back we find the gates guarded not indeed by an angel with a flaming sword but by many devils with machine-guns and bombers.

Of course there is a large element of illusion in this. The past is never so golden as Memory paints it. The pre-War world was anything but an Eden. But there was really in the late nineteenth century a social and intellectual order of immense value which Europe has almost lost and which young people find it difficult to believe in. When I seek for a type of it, one of the figures which comes more than any other to my mind is that of Graham Wallas.

Not that he was "Victorian" in the current sense of that word. He was one of the keenest and subtlest critics of the Victorian age in thought, in convention, in education, in methods of government. But he did possess to a signal degree a spirit which is now so hard to find and which we took too much for granted while it still flourished.

I think first of his serenity, or at least something that seemed like serenity. A keen sensitiveness to the wrongs of mankind and conscientiousness about his own action were an integral element in his nature and no doubt gave him many sleepless hours. But he was unperturbed, or at least presented an unperturbed front to the world, because he

was not preoccupied by small things, not troubled by resentments or phobias, not distracted by the whispers of egoism. He was always studying human nature, always amused by it, laughing at it, but not bitter about it; studying in order to help not to destroy. We have deadlier enemies about us now, or at least we think we have; and we are afraid of them and hate them.

I think of his freedom. I never knew anyone so completely free from fixed orthodoxies, prejudices, partisan feelings. His eyes used positively to sparkle when he came to the conclusion that some former view of his own was wrong and he could effectively set to work disproving it. Most people who claim to fight for the Truth really fight for some cause or some interest which stirs their emotions as no mere pursuit of truth could stir them, but when Wallas spoke of "truth" he meant the actual fact, the thing that really happens. That is what he always wanted to find out and to teach.

This freedom, this serenity, came, I believe, from the fact that, more than anyone I have ever known, he was always observing and thinking freshly—always, so to speak, "taking notice." Only a minority of mankind spend much effort on thinking; and almost all of those who think hardest keep their thought within narrow limits; the limits of books or laboratories or the practice of a profession. But Wallas studied the world of human beings. In an omnibus, in a railway carriage, most of all in a Committee of the County Council or the old School Board or London University, when he met both the types he knew and the types he did not know, saw them at work, saw what habits and idiosyncrasies and interests moved them, he was always observing and thinking and from time to time making notes in a pocket-book. Most of us work and make notes in our studies, but are content to be lazy or indifferent in omnibuses or undergrounds, and even sometimes in committees. But to this student of human nature a new and important fact in his own special subject might occur at any time, and his readers know how many illuminating pages in his books are the result of this constant vigilance.

Such methods would have been dangerous in a man of less trained intellect. But though Wallas was a little severe on the methods of his own education, he was a highly cultivated man; he was a teacher before he was an administrator, a schoolmaster before he was a professor, and had studied Greek as well as history and philosophy before he began taking notes in omnibuses. He saw the importance and interest of things hitherto neglected. Few people had heard of Francis Place till Wallas discovered him. Of the millions of people occupied in political controversy many no doubt had cursed the strange perversities of "human nature in politics," but few or none before Wallas had really studied them scientifically, as a zoologist might study the behaviour of dogs. Everyone knew that we Englishmen lived in a very large community, mostly urban and industrial; there were many books filled with commonplace reflections on the subject; but no one before had seriously observed and thought out the effects produced on the natural human instincts and cravings by the conditions of a "Great Society." That book is one of the very few of which I could say that it made a permanent difference in my outlook on human conduct, and I believe Wallas's disciple, Walter Lippmann, has said the same.

This is true originality, and in this sense I regard Wallas as one of the most original minds of his generation. He did not, I think, make any special effort to be original. He did not initiate any revolution in thought or become the leader of any party or movement. He was original in the sense that what he said and wrote was genuinely the fruit of his own thinking. Bergson has observed what a large part of man's life is almost mechanical and automatic, carried through without any exertion of will or thought. This is true not merely of the machine-minder or clerk or shop-assistant going through the same monotonous routine day by day; it is true of writers, teachers, public speakers, clergymen, and intellectuals generally. They repeat their lessons, their jokes, their formulae; they make the same subconscious response to the same stimulus, and only when some new or unexpected

stimulus comes do they really think or exercise will. But Wallas seemed to be always thinking, always alive. Not in the least that he was one of those over-conscious savants who have always an improving book in their pockets and count all time lost when they are not working. On the contrary, as his *Art of Thought* shows, he was specially interested in the process of discovery, invention, creation, and was eloquent on the inestimable value of times of idleness, when the mind could lie quiet and give the sub-conscious a chance of whispering its suggestions. He took pleasure in showing to dons and schoolmasters the lists he had made of men of genius, from Newton and Darwin to Shelley, and explaining how much they owed to having had their education broken or interrupted, whether by illness or outward circumstances or sheer inability to learn their lessons.

He was, as I have said, curiously free from prejudices or rigid orthodoxies. Yet, of course, as no one can study a problem without making a hypothesis, so no one can successfully face life without some solid foundation of belief, some strong sense of the difference between true and false, between right and wrong. Here also Wallas was a child of his age. While he had no belief in any traditional religious creed, he had no doubt whatever about the importance of seeking truth and acting for the public good. He was a free man, and accepted the duties incumbent on a free man, according to the old Liberal code: not to be afraid, not to be mean, to care for public causes, to defend the innocent, to protect the weak. As Lord Stamp has well said of him, he was abundantly tolerant of differences of opinion and custom, but he could never be worn down by mere custom or repetition into tolerating an injustice. He remains to me a type of that *Humanitas* towards man and beast, which was once generally accepted without question as an ideal, then undermined by those four years during which the civilized peoples concentrated on doing the maximum of evil towards one another, and never fully restored during the following twenty years of painful reconstruction, hindered by irresolution and suspicion and stained with unparalleled cruelties. It is valuable

## PREFACE

while working towards some new Eden to remember some of the choice spirits of the old.

But he himself, I think, would have regarded these remarks as irrelevant. He always maintained that a man should be known by his main life work and his desire was to be known by his books. That is indeed inevitable. It is only by his books that future generations can know him, and only by serious study of his books will they know him as more than a name.

Some of the essays in this volume bear marks of their date. Notably the Oxford of to-day is very different from that portrayed in "Oxford and the Nation." Some of the criticisms no longer apply and many of the recommendations have been already fulfilled. But Universities can learn still from these words of Graham Wallas as they can from the much earlier criticisms of Matthew Arnold.

G. M.

## GRAHAM WALLAS

(1858-1932)

1858 Born Sunderland, son of Gilbert Innes Wallas, later Vicar of Barnstaple and Rector of Shobrooke, and Frances Talbot Wallas.

1871-1877 Shrewsbury School.

1877-1881 Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

1881-1890 Classical schoolmaster.

1882 First meeting with Sidney Webb.

1885 Leaves Highgate School "on a question of religious conformity."

1886-1904 Member of Fabian Society

1888-1895 Member of Executive of Fabian Society.

1889 *Fabian Essay on Property under Socialism.*

1890 University Extension Lecturer.

1894-1904 London School Board.

1895 Resigns from Executive of Fabian Society.

1895-1923 Lecturer at London School of Economics and Political Science.

1896-1897 First lecturing tour in United States of America.

1897 Marries Ada Radford.

1897 *Life of Francis Place.*

1897-1904 Chairman of School Management Committee of London School Board.

1898-1904 Member of Technical Education Board for London.

1904 Leaves Fabian Society.

1904-1907 Member of London County Council.

1908 *Human Nature in Politics.*

1908-1910 Member of Education Committee of London County Council

1908-1928 Member of Senate of London University.

1910 Lecturing in United States of America.

1912-1915 Member of Royal Commission on the Civil Service.

MEN AND IDEAS

appeared in H. B. Binns's *A Century of Education*, 1808-1908;  
the *New Republic* and Messrs. Williams & Norgate for Dr.  
Jacks's article.

MAY WALLAS

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*Part I*

## BIOGRAPHY



## JEREMY BENTHAM (1922)

**I**N THREE YEARS' TIME a century will have passed since the foundation-stone was laid of this College, and thereby of the great University of London which grew from it. It is, therefore, eminently fitting that you have devoted your commemoration ceremony this year to an examination of your origins; and I myself feel that you were wise in putting at the head of the list of your founders the name of Jeremy Bentham. It is true that it was Campbell, the poet, who first, in a letter to *The Times*, proposed that a London University should be founded. But the intellectual father of our University and College was Jeremy Bentham. Bentham, old man as he was—for he was seventy-seven when the foundation-stone was laid—served on the first organizing committee. On all the early committees of the College you constantly find the names of Bentham's personal disciples. James Mill, George Grote, Joseph Hume, Henry Brougham, John Cam Hobhouse, John Austin—all worked for the College, and Mill's greater son, John Stuart Mill, was one of the first body of students. But what was more important was that the ideas and ideals which gave life and meaning to the study of the moral and political sciences in the new institution were so largely drawn from Bentham's teaching and writing. He himself recognized the identity of his own purposes with that of the College, and when, seven years after the laying of the foundation-stone, he died, he left to your library one hundred and seventy boxes and bundles of his manuscripts, which are still there—an unexhausted mine for the history of two

\* The Foundation Oration, delivered in the Great Hall of University College, London, March 23, 1922, and reprinted in the *Political Science Quarterly* for March, 1923. (Ed.)

vitally important generations of English intellectual development. The most beautiful ornament of our University offices at South Kensington is a bust of Bentham by the French sculptor, P. J. David, inscribed, *A Jérémie Bentham, Plurimorum maxima felicitas*; and the quaintest of your College possessions is Bentham's skeleton, dressed in his favourite clothes, topped by a wax mask of his face, and holding his stick Dobbin, with which he used to trot every morning round his Westminster garden.

I propose, therefore, that we should ask ourselves to-night what manner of man Jeremy Bentham was, and what it was that made him one of the great originating forces in the history of human thought.

We should first notice the almost unexampled length of his life of intellectual production. He worked continuously at the main problems of social science for seventy years, and made a link between the England of Dr. Johnson and the England—which he himself did so much to fashion—of the Reform Bill. He was born in 1748. He was twenty-eight years of age when the American Colonies declared their independence, he was forty-one when the Bastille was taken, and sixty-seven when Waterloo was fought, and he died, working to the last, the day before the Reform Bill of 1832 became law. His father, Jeremiah Bentham, was the pushing, well-to-do and Tory-Jacobite clerk of one of the City Companies, who married comparatively late in life, and was delighted to find that the tiny little boy whom he christened Jeremy showed, almost from babyhood, clear indications of genius. Jeremiah Bentham, as long as he lived, was Jeremy Bentham's cross of affliction. His ambition, his showmanship, his thick-skinned snobbery, his love and his pride tormented Jeremy's boyhood and youth. Jeremy was to be Lord Chancellor, and was to reach the Woolsack by social as much as by professional success. At seven years old Bentham was sent as a boarder to that concentration-camp of eighteenth-century bullying, Westminster School. Luckily he was too small and weak and wonderful to be bullied. It was clear that if anyone hit him he would break, and the dullest brutes

at Westminster were amazed at his cleverness. But he suffered horribly from fear—of ghosts, of hell, of everything of which an imaginative child can be afraid. At twelve, he was sent to what was then the most fashionable and possibly the idlest college at Oxford, Queen's College. Within a week or two of his matriculation George II died, and Bentham wrote a copy of Latin verses on the occasion. His father had them printed, and took them round to his literary acquaintances. Dr. Johnson, then the acknowledged dictator of literature in London, said that they were “a very pretty performance of a young man.” Bentham, in after life, said that they were “a mediocre performance on a trumpery subject, written by a miserable child.” At Oxford, Bentham, shy, ridiculously over-dressed, and skimped in his allowance, was no more happy than at Westminster. The big young squires of Queen's College called him “the philosopher.” Yet they were capable of showing off their strength by holding him upside down, and he lost one of his few half-guineas in this way. He scorned the contemptible education of unreformed Oxford as heartily as did Gibbon or Adam Smith; “We went,” he says, “to the foolish lectures of our tutors to be taught something of logical jargon.”

Meanwhile the poor little wonder-child was leading, unknown to anyone else, an inner life of heroic purpose. When he was six or seven years of age, his father engaged for him a French tutor, and the tutor made him read Fénelon's *Télémaque*, which had been written, half a century before, for the little Duke of Burgundy, who, if he had not died of smallpox, would have become King of France. The unrelied excellences of Telemachus seem absurd to a modern schoolboy, but the book captivated Bentham, as it had captivated the little Duke. “In my own imagination,” Bentham says, “and at the age of six or seven, I identified my own personality with that of the hero, who seemed to me to be a model of perfect virtue; and in my walk of life, whatever it may come to be, why, said I to myself, every now and then, why should I not be a Telemachus?”

His “walk in life” was fixed for him, partly by his father's

determination that he should be a lawyer, partly by his passionate devotion—which never left him—to the good of mankind, and partly by his strong instinctive interest in science and scientific method. Of the year 1785 he wrote: “This was the period of the birth of chemistry; and the phosphoric matches lately invented charmed me so much that I wrote a poem.” Your library contains Bentham’s translation of a French text-book of chemistry, and the draft of a preface to an unwritten book in which he explains that his intellectual life-work consisted of the application to the social sciences of the methods already invented for the natural sciences. “The present work,” he there says, “as well as any other work of mine that has been or will be published on the subject of legislation or any other branch of moral science, is an attempt to extend the experimental method of reasoning from the physical branch to the moral.”

Bentham’s general interest in scientific method was combined with a particular talent for introspective psychology. He was a born psychologist—born, unfortunately, before the discovery of modern psychology. In his last memorandum, which he wrote a day or two before his death, he says: “I have two minds, one of which is perpetually occupied in looking at and examining the other”; and at the age of forty-four, when he was in love, and writing, as lovers do, to explain away a silly letter, he said, “What made me write so foolishly? I’ll tell you; for I have made my head to screw off and screw on, and I can set it on my knee, and open it, and see what is in the inside of it.”

From a combination of social passion with psychological method Bentham arrived at that “Greatest Happiness Theory,” or “Utilitarian Principle,” which dominated his social philosophy. The use he made of that principle for legal, political and social invention was new; but he never claimed to have invented the principle itself. When he was twenty-three years old, he read Priestley’s *Essay on Government*, and found the passage: “The good and happiness of the members—that is, the majority of the members—of any

state, is the great standard by which everything relating to that state must finally be determined." Henceforward, he substituted the principle of "The Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number" for his vague determination to devote himself, like Telemachus, to the good of mankind. But what is Happiness? He took from Helvétius and Beccaria the eighteenth-century psychological answer—that it consisted in the presence of pleasure and the absence of pain. There remained the question of the relation between this psychological fact and the problem of human conduct. Bentham answered that men have an irresistible instinct to seek pleasure and to avoid pain, and that the members of any community would necessarily become happy if their institutions were so contrived that pleasure resulted from social, and pain from unsocial conduct. His *Introduction to Morals and Legislation* (1789) begins: "Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. . . . In words a man may pretend to abjure their Empire; but in reality he will remain subject to it all the while."

Before reading Priestley's pamphlet, Bentham had taken his Oxford degree at the age of fifteen, had begun to "eat dinners" at Lincoln's Inn, and had returned to Oxford to hear the great Blackstone deliver the newly established professorial course on English Law. "I heard," he says, "the lectures, aged sixteen, and then no small part of them with rebel ears." When he was eighteen he took his M.A., and returned to live in chambers in Lincoln's Inn on a small income of £100 a year settled on him by his father, who had married again. His father's care had provided a few cases for him; but he soon killed them (in one instance by advising the client that litigation would cost more than it was worth), and devoted himself to the enormous task of discovering what are the ends aimed at by law, and by what means those ends should be attained. He knew well that in so doing he was giving up any chance of professional success. His step-brother, Charles Abbot (afterwards Speaker of the House of

Commons), wrote to him: "You are just able to keep body and soul together without practice; I am not."

So Bentham, "just keeping body and soul together" on £100 a year in Lincoln's Inn, began the way of life which he kept up for sixty-six years, and which is recorded in the enormous mass of his manuscripts in your library. Every day he wrote, generally fifteen folio pages, and as he wrote he thought. He already, in the case of his friends Wilson and Lind, showed his power of attracting and holding disciples. But in the main his life at Lincoln's Inn was that of the solitary thinker, and no one has described better than Bentham the sufferings of that life. In a treatise on political economy he speaks of the "timidity," which "labours in grief, in darkness, in awkwardness, embarrassment, and false shame." . the frequent and afflictive companions and most cruel enemies of merit and solitary genius." He did not escape the danger which leads the solitary thinker to postpone the publication of his thoughts till the impossible day when their form shall have become perfect. Wilson writes to him in 1787: "Your history, since I have known you, has been to be always running from a good scheme to a better. In the meantime, life passes away and nothing is completed." In 1776 the insistence of his friends had induced him to publish anonymously the *Fragment on Government*. Blackstone had turned his Oxford lectures into a book, opening with a few vague and pompous generalizations about the glories of English law and the English constitution, and the social contract as the original source of law. Bentham attacked him from his own psychological standpoint, and in a succession of scornful and sometimes over-elaborated paragraphs, shook the great judge's phrases as a terrier shakes a rat. The treatise was ascribed to half the best-known writers of the time, till Jeremiah Bentham's paternal pride let out the secret.

The *Fragment* ceased at once to be a matter of drawing-room talk, but its publication had given Bentham a new and important friend. Lord Shelburne (better known as Lord Lansdowne, and at one time Prime Minister), called at

Lincoln's Inn, and asked Bentham to stay at Bowood House. Lansdowne, though he was older and more experienced than Bentham, learnt much from him, and, like all those who came in close contact with him, thoroughly enjoyed his company. "His disinterestedness," wrote Lansdowne, "and originality of character refresh me as much as the country air does a London physician." Bentham, on the other hand, says that Lansdowne "made me feel I was something" The life of the great English country houses was then in its glory, and during long visits at Bowood Bentham met the leading English statesmen of the time on equal terms. He was a musician, a chess-player, an excellent French scholar, and what ladies would now call a "dear." The ladies at Bowood, rather tired, perhaps, of politics and sport and of the men who sat long over their wine, delighted in him. Lansdowne suggested that Bentham should marry one of them; and Bentham fell gently and unsuccessfully in love with another one. He worked steadily, whether in London or at Bowood, at his great system of political science, part of which was published, in 1789, as *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*. This is the best written of all his books, and remains the best general statement of the Benthamite gospel. It is based on a rigorously consistent psychology, as psychology was then understood. To Bentham no motive is in itself either good or bad. All human instincts are equally natural, and the only moral judgment that we can apply to them must result from an inquiry whether in any particular case they lead to the unhappiness or happiness of the greatest number. Loyalty, and love, and anger, and piety, and patriotism, are in themselves neither virtues nor vices. Love is the same instinct as lust, and caution as fear; we should only praise or blame them when in each case we have unflinchingly calculated their actual or probable effects. We have no duties to abstractions, like states, and constitutions, and natural rights, and parties, and churches, but only to actual human beings who can feel actual pains and pleasures.

Bentham still thought of himself in 1789 as a Tory like

his father, and it was a quarter of a century after the publication of the *Introduction* before he began to realize the full revolutionary implications of his method. But there could be no doubt of its effectiveness when he turned it (as he did in this book) on to the pretences and absurdities and cruelties of eighteenth-century English legal procedure, on to John Doe and Richard Roe, and the rule which forbade a prisoner to give evidence on his own behalf. Other lawyers felt, like Bentham's step-brother Abbot, that a man with his way to make in the world should find out what law was, instead of asking what law ought to be. But, as the years went on, Bentham's patient industry, his ingenuity and fertility, his quaint humour, and the smouldering fire of scorn behind his books and pamphlets and talk, had their effects even on the Inns of Court. Every decade a few public-spirited lawyers—Romilly, and Brougham, and Austin, and the rest—became his disciples; and at the end of the nineteenth century Sir Henry Maine was able to say: "I do not know a single law reform effected since Bentham's day which cannot be traced to his influence."

Before the publication of the *Introduction*, Bentham had spent two years in Russia. His only brother, Samuel Bentham, nine years younger than himself, had been educated in accordance with Bentham's advice, and had become a brilliant and ingenious mechanical engineer. Samuel Bentham was in the employ of the great Russian landowner, Prince Potemkin, and was carrying on the work of Peter the Great by training serfs as artisans. Bentham stayed with him, writing his daily fifteen pages (including a *Defence of Usury*, and a *Criminal Code* in French), and in 1788 returned, a year before the French Revolution, to England.

In March 1789, the Revolution was already in full swing, and Bentham writes: "For these five or six months past my head and my heart have been altogether in France." The French Revolution made Bentham at once an international figure. He had met at Bowood Dumont, the Swiss tutor of Lansdowne's sons, who apparently read some of Bentham's manuscripts, and became his avowed follower. Dumont was

now Secretary to Mirabeau, the leader of the early stages of the Revolution, and turned Bentham's philosophy, and many of the details of his political and legal proposals, into speeches to be delivered by Mirabeau to the National Assembly. One may see in your library long slips of manuscript inscribed, "To be shown to M. Mirabeau." The procedure of the Assembly was largely based on a sketch by Bentham, and he, with Wilberforce, the Tory philanthropist, and Paine, the republican, was made a citizen of France.

In 1792, when the French Revolution had taken its own course, Bentham's father died, and left him £600 a year. At the same time, Samuel Bentham returned from Russia and began to work for the British Admiralty. Then came the great disaster of Bentham's life. He and his brother in Russia had worked out a scheme for a wheel-shaped building, where a single inspector could watch a large number of workmen in the galleries which radiated from his observation room. The building was to be called the Panopticon. This scheme Bentham now proposed to the Government as a means of improving the abominable prisons of the day, and abolishing the equally abominable hulks and transportation-settlements. The Ministry encouraged him, he was enthusiastic, and he sank nearly all his inherited capital on the purchase of land and the commencement of a model prison at Millbank. He was convinced that the same scheme could be used for abolishing the degradation of the old Poor Law, and that it was an infallible "machine for grinding rogues honest and idle men industrious." He proposed a contract by which all the prisoners and paupers in England should be handed over to him to employ for profit in Panopticon buildings. But Bentham's psychology, though it was a good enough weapon for reform in legal and parliamentary procedure, was utterly insufficient for the direction of the whole lives of tens of thousands of children and women, and invalids and defectives, and criminals, and unemployed or unemployable workmen. Yet every year Bentham became more convinced of the perfection of his scheme, and every year its details became more minute and more unworkable.

The Ministry began to distrust him ; but, after the manner of busy statesmen in war-time, came to no decision. Already in 1795 Wilberforce writes, "Poor Bentham is dying of the sickness of hope deferred" ; and again in 1811, "Never was any one worse used than Bentham. I have seen the tears running down the face of that strong-minded man through vexation at the pressing importunity of creditors and the insolence of official underlings, when day after day he was begging at the Treasury for what was, indeed, a mere matter of right." At last, in 1811, the Government appointed a Select Committee, which drew up an unanswerable report both as to the impracticability of the scheme and as to the right of Bentham to compensation, and he was paid £23,000.

He was now sixty-five years old, and many of his friends must have thought of him as a broken man, broken by one of those "fixed ideas" which are the special curse of solitary and original thinkers. Many years later he told Bowring: "I cannot look among Panopticon papers ; it is like opening a drawer where devils are locked up ; it is like breaking into a haunted house."

But Bentham's best and most effective work was still to be done. In 1808 he had become acquainted with James Mill, a Scotch philosopher who was supporting a growing family by literary journalism, and through Mill with Francis Place, the Charing Cross tailor, ex-trade union secretary and masterly election-manager. Mill and Place became his devoted disciples, and brought their revered and beloved master for the first time into practical English politics. They convinced him that the Greatest Happiness Principle was meaningless unless it led to universal suffrage. Bentham became the intellectual leader of the famous Westminster group of Radical politicians. He was soon surrounded by men a generation or two generations younger than himself—Mill and his son, Place, Wakefield, Grote, Southwood Smith, Parkes, Bowring, Buller, Chadwick, and others. Under the stimulus of these new followers, with their varied experience, and their hopes for a new world after the long war, he carried on his work as political inventor and adviser more

continuously and effectively than ever before. He drafted a complete scheme of Parliamentary democracy. He poured out details of elementary, secondary, and technical public education. He performed miracles of industry in preparing a codification of all law. Between 1824 and 1832, with the help of Southwood Smith and Chadwick, he wrote his unfinished but amazing *Constitutional Code*, the mine from which a new system of English administration and a new relation between English central and local government were extracted in the years that followed the Reform Bill of 1832. From the incompletely printed manuscript of the *Constitutional Code* Chadwick took the details of the New Poor Law of 1834, Parkes and Place the details of the Municipal Reform Act of 1835, Chadwick the details, and even the phrasing of the Act establishing a scientific system of vital statistics in 1836. The whole book was at last printed in 1841, and contained, mixed with some details which seem to us fanciful, schemes which have since then been carried out for a logical division of work between the Government departments, for Ministries of Health and Education, and Police, and Transport, in connection with corresponding municipal committees and expert municipal officials, and—most wonderful of all, when one thinks of the patronage arrangements of the time—a Civil Service recruited by competitive examination, access to which was to be made possible to the poorest boy of talent by a great system of educational scholarships. Talleyrand was right when he said of Bentham in 1830: “Though all the world has stolen from him, he is still rich.

Bentham in his old age became an international figure in a wider sense than he had been when he was made a citizen of France. Dumont's French translations and condensations of his manuscripts were read all over the world, and were used by the leaders of the new national movements which defeated the Holy Alliance and created free nations from the fragments of the Spanish and Turkish Empires. In 1793 he had addressed a vigorous pamphlet to the French Government with the title *Emancipate your Colonies*. His English

version of this pamphlet ends: "You will, I say, give up your colonies because you have no right to govern them, because they had rather not be governed by you, because it is against their interests to be governed by you, because you can get nothing by governing them, because you cannot keep them, because the expense of trying to keep them would be ruinous, because your constitution would suffer for your keeping them, because your principles forbid your keeping them, and because you would do good to all the world by parting with them."

This pamphlet was used during the next thirty years for semi-private circulation among the friends of colonial liberty, and the manuscripts in your library show that Bentham was in 1828 drafting a petition to be addressed from the Canadians to the British Parliament asking for complete separation.

But events and Bentham's own intellectual industry and honesty and elasticity were, during the last few years of his life, driving him far beyond a merely negative attitude as to England's overseas dependencies. In 1819 James Mill had become a high official of the East India Company, and soon brought John Mill in as his assistant. Bentham became profoundly interested in Indian reform; and Rammohun Roy, the founder of the reforming society called the Brahmo Somaj, became his friend and correspondent. Lord William Bentinck, when in 1827 he went as Governor-General to India, wrote to Bentham: "I am going to British India, but I shall not be Governor-General. It is you who will be Governor-General." For India Bentham concentrated his efforts on the task of separating law from despotic discretion, and of building up a system of legal and judicial institutions based on political science and independent of the executive government. If ever we march out of India and leave behind us anything better than mountains of empty soda-water bottles, it may be that this principle of Bentham's will prove to be our most permanent contribution to Indian civilization.

In 1829, when Bentham was eighty-one years old, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the reckless, able son of Bentham's old

friend Edward Wakefield, came out of Newgate prison after serving a sentence of two years for the fraudulent abduction of an heiress. In prison Gibbon Wakefield had thought out a scheme for the scientific settlement and self-government of the Australian colonies. He took his scheme to Bentham, and it is a wonderful proof of the elasticity of Bentham's mind in extreme old age that he was at once converted, and sat down to draft, on sheets of paper which are still in your library, the prospectus of a Colonization Society, and a declaration of the principles of Australian self-government. One sentence of his draft states the object of the proposed Colonization Society—in words which those responsible for the intellectual life of Australia should still heed to-day—as the “giving to the immigrant into Australia not merely the means of existence . . . but, through the medium of education, the means of *well-being* in all time to come, as well in respect of the mind as in respect of the body.” One is glad to know that the Australian scheme even healed in part the wound of the Panopticon disappointment, and that Bentham could write: “I am reconciled to the loss of Panopticon when I think of the mass of happiness that is being created there.”

What is still more wonderful is that Bentham at eighty-one saw that, if England was to help in the creation of this “mass of happiness” in her temperate colonies, the old principle of “Emancipate your Colonies” must be abandoned in favour of a new principle of self-government within the Empire. He printed a page of retraction to that effect, which he pasted on the remaining copies of his original pamphlet; and six years after Bentham's death his disciples made that principle the basis of that new Canadian polity which soon spread to the other Dominions.

I have now finished this slight and inadequate outline of Bentham's long life and varied work. In studying his life I have been struck by one fact which I should like to end by impressing on you. Among Bentham's disciples and assistants in the work of giving form and inspiration to the evolution of organized liberty in Britain, the British Empire, and the new nation-states which strove to create themselves after the

fall of Napoleon, and new meaning to the idea of law throughout the world, there was no one who was connected with either of the ancient Universities of England. The fact that at Oxford or Cambridge men read and lectured on Aristotle or Locke for the purpose of manufacturing degrees seems to have so sterilized their reading and teaching as to prevent them from influencing either thought or action. Those who, under Bentham's leadership, transformed the institutions of their time were not English University professors and scholars, but Mill, the poor Scotch student and hack-writer, and his home-educated son, Chadwick, the journalist turned official, Place the tailor, Grote the banker, Wakefield the ex-convict, Dumont the French tutor, Parkes the Birmingham solicitor, and Romilly the Huguenot barrister.

You young men and women in this hall belong to a generation which faces greater social and intellectual confusion than that which followed the Napoleonic wars. You have ready to your hand a mass of knowledge about man's nature and origin which was hidden from Bentham and his friends. But their knowledge, poor and inadequate as it now seems to us, gave them a sense of power and vision by which they overturned mountains of prejudice and invented new paths for civilization. All the world is now calling for social invention and intellectual leadership. Shall it again be true that those who spend precious years of youth and leisure in organized study gain nothing thereby for themselves or others except the letters of their degrees and the colours of their hoods? Or shall we, who belong to the University which is Bentham's spiritual child, show that we, like our great founder, learn in order to act, and act in order to forward the cause of human happiness?

## BENTHAM AS POLITICAL INVENTOR (1926)

THE DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S, writing four years ago in the *Evening Standard*, told us that "You can no more invent a constitution or a social order than you can build a tree." The Dean's statement is, perhaps, founded upon a vague memory of Edmund Burke, and in Burke's time the dogma that the British Constitution had grown like a tree, and had not been invented like a machine, was perhaps sixty per cent true. But since the Reform Bill of 1832 that dogma has become steadily less true; and if all those parts of our present constitution which have grown without much invention, even including the cathedral deaneries, were now put together, they would not, I suppose, amount to six per cent of the whole. When the Dean walks out into the Strand he sees on the pavement a professional policeman of the type invented in 1829; if he takes part in an election he votes by the invention of the ballot; he pays every year new rates and ingenious new taxes for a hundred newly invented purposes, to invented local bodies controlled by invented Government departments. His vote helps to create a Parliament whose composition and standing orders have been deliberately revolutionized in our own time, and whose statutes are administered, and often drafted, by a civil service chosen by the invented expedient of competitive examination. He invests his savings in enterprises made possible by the invented machinery of the Limited Liability Acts, and his civil rights are defined and protected by courts some of whose names and much of whose procedure would have been unintelligible to Burke or Lord Eldon.

\* The Creighton Lecture, delivered at King's College, London, in 1925, and published in the *Contemporary Review* for March, 1926. (Ed.)

Some day our historians will interest themselves in the persons by whom these inventions were made, and the processes by which they made them. No one now writes a history of the transformation of British industry during the last four generations, without emphasizing the importance of Watt, and Arkwright, and Stephenson, and Faraday, and Bessemer. And some future historian of the transformation of British institutions during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries may tell us about the work and methods and motives of Sir Charles Trevelyan, and Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth, and Chadwick, and Cardwell, and Patrick Colquhoun, and Richard Mayne, and Rowland Hill, and Jeremy Bentham, and so on to Lord Haldane and Sir Josiah Stamp. In such a history of British political invention by far the greatest name will be that of Bentham, whether as inventor himself, or as having inspired by his suggestions, and by the example of his methods, the inventions of others. In my time as an undergraduate at Oxford, many of us were trained to despise Bentham. Some of our "Greats" tutors made, indeed, a considerable proportion of their income by jeering at those quotations from Bentham's writings which they met with in the manuals of philosophy. When, therefore, I think about Bentham, I can only escape from the attitude of superiority by asking myself what political inventions I myself can claim to have made, and by comparing my own achievements with those of the man who, in seventy years of uninterrupted toil, made inventions which have transformed our legal procedure, substituted competition for patronage in the civil service, and introduced a logical relation between our central and local government; who made scientific health administration possible by the creation of social statistics, and introduced a hundred minor improvements, whether in savings banks and money orders, or the ordnance survey or office architecture, or by the invention of words like "international" and "codification," without which modern political thinking would be more confused than it is.

I propose, therefore, that we should spend this hour, not

in considering how London University examinees can most easily get honours by repeating to examiners their own jibes against Benthamism, but in inquiring, with all humility, whether we can learn from Bentham's writings any of the means which enabled him to make his political inventions. I shall not refer to Bentham's very effective negative criticisms of the institutions of his time and of the arguments of their defenders. I shall confine myself to his positive political inventions, using "political," for the most part, in the narrower sense which excludes those inventions in judicial procedure and legislative form which occupied at least half of his working life.

Some of the means of success in political invention which Bentham possessed are outside our own control. When most of us were born it was already settled that our memory should be less accurate, our imagination less fertile, and our natural sympathies less acute than those of the little boy who, at Westminster School and Queen's College, Oxford, was, when George III came to the throne, already called "the philosopher." We may not possess a nervous system which can be worked at full speed till the age of eighty-four, or the small independent income which enabled Bentham, by careful economy, to refuse every opportunity of earning money. Bentham himself recognized how rare was the equipment of a first-rate inventor. When he found that, in the fifteen months from February, 1800, to April, 1801, more than a hundred persons had been hung for forging the clumsily printed bank-notes and cheques of the time, he and Patrick Colquhoun (the originator of the idea of an efficient Metropolitan Police), set to work to invent a method of printing which should make forgery more difficult. The Directors of the Bank of England refused to be troubled on the matter (a fact which Bentham explained by saying that "the gentlemen of the Bank are never the poorer" for the existing system, "and their friend the solicitor is the richer"); and Bentham, in a letter to Colquhoun, wrote "As to your friend, Mr. B—, he may be a very excellent Bank Director, but it is plain that he is not of the Colquhoun breed. Where

is the wonder? How few are!"\* But while it is too late for us in this room to be born Benthams, or to do a hundred per cent of his work as political inventor, some of us may be fortunate enough, if we study carefully the account which he gives us of his methods, to turn a possibility of our doing one-tenth of one per cent of his work into a possibility of our doing two, or even three-tenths of one per cent.

What, then, were those methods? Bentham, in the treatise on education which he calls *Chrestomathia*, defines invention as "imagination taken under command by attention, and directed to the accomplishment of some particular object or end in view," and adds that "among the objects of invention or discovery is method" (VIII, 76). The first requirement of his method of using imagination for the purpose of invention is that we should be clear as to the end to be served by the invention which we seek. The end he proposed to himself in all his searches was human happiness, but those of my audience to whom such an end seems unworthy and degrading may use Bentham's method to attain any other end which they prefer, provided always that they are as clear as Bentham was what that end is, and as determined as Bentham was to reach it. The next stage in his method was the formation of a habit of allowing thought to spread as widely as possible from association to association, while constantly watching for any sign that some new idea might appear which would help towards the attainment of his end. At the age of sixty he described himself as "pretty much in the habit of sending out my thoughts upon their travels into the region of future contingencies" (X, 442), and we can watch the working of that habit in one of Bowring's notes of Bentham's conversation, when he was eighty years old and was undressing himself for bed. Remembering how, forty years before, he had lodged in a farmhouse at Hendon, he said to Bowring, "Oh, how well I was off at Hendon for society! I was near the farmer's rooms, and heard through the partitions the cheerfulness of the human voice. Of how

\* Works, Vol. X, p. 357. All references to Bowring's edition. (Ed.)

many things we talk! Like Cæsar with his four secretaries; but in his time when writing was so slow, with their angular letters, it was not so difficult. Strange, that running writing should have been discovered so late, and the Arabic numerals too. What shocking perplexity in the Roman numerals! It would have been better if the form had been duodecimal instead of decimal. Why should not all intellectual ideas be communicated by figures—as musical ideas are by notes, and arithmetical by cyphers? Might not there be a written universal language, if not a spoken one? It is too late to talk on the subject now. It is worth serious thought. we will talk of it when we are vibrating (i.e. walking or trotting) in the garden" (X, 562). You will notice here, first that Bentham's train of thought, even in casual conversation, always turns by habit towards the means of producing general ~~hypotheses~~, just as the quivering needle in the compass turns towards the north, and next that he distinguishes between wandering thought, even when so directed by habit, and the more systematic and conscious process which he calls "serious thought."

The book on Logic, on which he worked at intervals throughout his life, would have given a full description, as far as the psychological analysis of his time permitted, of his method during such serious thought; but that book was never finished. Much of its material is contained in four or five published fragments; and of these perhaps the most interesting begins with the words "Logical arrangements, which have served as . . . instruments of invention or discovery to Jeremy Bentham" (III, 285). He warns his readers that conscious logical arrangement is not all that is required for invention, that invention owes much to "this or that single and insulated analogy presented in some happy moment by the hand of chance"; and yet, he assures them, invention has already drawn great assistance from conscious logical method and is capable of deriving still greater assistance (VIII, 261). Logical method, as applied to the political sciences, requires, he says, that we should first give "a distinct and fixed meaning" to "a numerous tribe of words of

which . . . the meaning had been floating in the clouds, and blown about by every blast of doctrine—words to the which in the mind of many a writer, no assignable ideas, no fixed, no real import had been annexed" (III, 286). Those exact meanings when applied to pleasures and pains will be found capable of quantitative comparison; and in this way, he says, "the precision and clearness and incontestableness of mathematical calculation are introduced for the first time into the field of morals" (III, 286).

His description of his "logical arrangements" is most intelligible when it is read side by side with any one of the systematic explorations of a political problem in which he actually used these "instruments of invention." He follows, for instance, his description of quasi-mathematical method by an examination of the legal conception of property, or as he calls it, "the distributive branch of law." In order to appreciate that examination one should remember the arguments about self-evident truths and natural and inalienable rights which the American and French Revolutions had started during his lifetime; or still better we should have listened, either in a workmen's train or in a Pullman smoking-car, to a present-day argument about Socialism; or should have read the *Times* report of the remarks of a magistrate or judge or Home Secretary on the prosecution of a Communist or Fascist disturber of the peace. Bentham says that "of the word obligation or the word right" as commonly used "the sound is mere sound . . . or no better than an effusion of *ipse dixitism*." For these words he would substitute, as the special ends or purposes of laws of property, the four elements of "security, subsistence, abundance and equality" (III, 293). These four elements are, he says, not only clear, but commensurable with each other; and he develops from them an analysis of the conditions of successful invention in legislation dealing with property, which the late Professor Marshall would have illustrated by drawing intersecting curves on a blackboard. "All these objects (i.e. security, subsistence, abundance, and equality) are," says Bentham, "with relation to each other, so many antagonizing forces.

In some instances, by the measure by which one is attained, so are one or more of the others; in other instances, one cannot be attained or endeavoured to be attained, but by the relinquishment, or *pro tanto* the sacrifice, of one or more of the others. Equality, in particular, finds in each of the other three a rival and an antagonist—and, in security and subsistence, rivals and antagonists of which the claims are of a superior order, and to which, on pain of universal destruction, in which itself will be involved, it must be obliged to yield. In a word, it is not equality itself, but only a tendency towards equality, after all the others are provided for, that, on the part of the ruling and other members of the community, is the proper object of endeavour. At the same time, in proportion as the subject is inquired into, it will be found that in all good systems of law, and even in all systems, the very worst not excepted, more or less regard is paid to equality" (III, 293-94). Bentham himself, however, was never satisfied with his own methods. He not only hoped for improvements in purely intellectual and mathematical logic, but also anticipated the main problem of the modern psychology of thought by prophesying the creation of "a logic of the will, as well as of the understanding"; for, he said, "the operations of the former faculty are neither less susceptible, nor less worthy, than those of the latter, of being delineated by rules."<sup>4</sup>\*

It is more essential again in the case of Bentham than in the case of any other great writer on political science, to remember the relation between his intellectual methods and the form of his published works. Throughout his seventy years of intellectual production he wrote from ten to sixteen folio pages of manuscript every working day. While he wrote he thought, and while he thought he wrote, so that before middle age it was almost true that he could not think to any effect except upon paper. At the age of eighty, when he was still writing his sixteen pages a day, and when the insomnia of old age came upon him, he complained that "between sleeps, I cannot do much in the way of invention, not having

\* Works, Vol. I, *Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Preface, p. 4.

the signs before me" (X, 583). Therefore, even when his books were compiled and edited from his manuscripts by his disciples, they still retain the characteristic of being a record of processes as well as of results. And anyone who starts to read the eleven enormous volumes of Bentham's *Collected Works*, or the still more enormous collection of his manuscripts in the library of University College, must try to imagine that some great inventor in the region of natural science, Ramsay, or Marconi, or Helmholtz, had formed the same habit, and had left behind him manuscripts recording all his unfruitful as well as his fruitful trains of thought. Page after page of Bentham's exploration of a political problem seem to lead us nowhere, and then suddenly his method justifies itself. For the last eighteen years, for instance, of his life, Bentham worked pretty continuously on his *Outline of a Constitutional Code*. When, two years before his death, he wrote that he was "codifying like any dragon" (XI, 33) he meant that he was still writing his daily stint of the *Constitutional Code*. Three-quarters of the book is like a very detailed diary of an ingenious and persistent explorer in the Sahara or the interior of Australia, set down on the days in which he discovered nothing. But let the student turn to those chapters of the *Constitutional Code* which deal with the relation between central and local government. They were mostly written in the early eighteen-twenties. The central executive Government of that time consisted of a Cabinet, the members of which divided the work between them on no intelligible system, and many of whom bore names like Lord Privy Seal, Lord President of the Council, Lord Chancellor, First Lord of the Treasury, and so on, which, neither to the ministers themselves, nor to the British public, gave any clear indication of their functions. Local government then consisted of a wilderness of infinitely varied corporations—parishes, and manors, and boroughs, and statutory commissioners, overlapping each other's functions, uncertain of their own powers, and having no connection whatever with each other or with the central executive. Bentham first applies to this problem the principle which he

urged on Chadwick, "always to do the same thing in the same way, choosing the best, and always to call the same thing by the same name." Every member of the Cabinet is to be called Minister for this or that function, and the functions of the Ministers are distributed on a logical system towards which, in the course of the last hundred years, we have gradually approximated. There are to be Ministers of Finance, Trade, Foreign Relations, Health, Domain, Education, Poor Relief, Communication and Transport, Police, Navy, Army, a Minister responsible for the system of representation by election, and a Legislation Minister who is to combine and enlarge the functions of parliamentary draftsman and government publisher. Local government is to be controlled by a uniform system of local elected bodies, one for each district, with a chairman whose functions are to be midway between those of an English mayor and a German burgermeister, and by a body of skilled departmental officers having the same names (health, communication, poor relief, education, police, etc.) as those of the ministers with whom they are to be in regular correspondence. For each district there is to be a local registrar, responsible for preparing and publishing statistics of births, deaths, marriages, health, land transfers, etc.—an official who was brought into existence by Parliament, with truncated functions, but with Bentham's own detailed nomenclature, four years after Bentham's death.

Whoever has studied the English social organization of the early nineteenth century—with the blundering ignorance of those who directed it and the pitiable sufferings of those whose lives were influenced by it—will feel, as he reads these chapters, a thrill of excitement at the sheer architectural beauty of Bentham's description, in his own pedantically precise vocabulary, of the duties of those ministers who, without overriding the initiative of the local elected councils, are to collect knowledge from them, and return knowledge and stimulus to them, who are, he says, to exercise with regard to them "the inspective, statistic, and melioration-suggestive functions." Throughout this whole section of the

*Constitutional Code*, Bentham sets his vivid imagination, helped often by his quaint humour, to invent details. He imagines a well-lighted crescent-shaped group of government buildings, taking the place of the existing rabbit-warrens of Downing Street and Pall Mall. He invents a set of speaking-tubes which correspond to the telephones of a modern Government office; he insists on document-lifts to take the place of drunken messengers and copying presses instead of Micawberish copying clerks. Writing before the appointment of Factory or Sanitary Inspectors in any part of the world, he proposes that his Health Minister should be responsible, through the local bodies, for smoke prevention, for the draining of stagnant water, for the ventilation of schools and theatres, for the provision of local museums showing the relation between weather, soil, climate, and health; and for the "professional-confederacy-checking-function," which shall prevent any body responsible for the admission of medical men to the profession from consisting solely of medical practitioners (IX, 445).

Or let the student turn to that section of the *Constitutional Code* which Bentham published separately under the title of *Official Aptitude Maximized, Expense Minimized*, and in which he seeks to invent a substitute for the system of personal patronage which a hundred years ago prevented any possibility of efficient administration. Efficient administration requires efficiently educated recruits for the Government service, and the English educational want of system after the Battle of Waterloo allowed for no such provision. The Government is, therefore, first to make up its mind as to the kind of education it desires for each group of its servants, and then to get into touch with any schools and institutions which are prepared to make themselves efficient; to send suitable scholars to them for a seven-year course; to examine these scholars at intervals during the course; and, finally, to select candidates for the civil service by an amazingly elaborate corruption-proof competitive system, in which questions for each candidate on each subject are drawn haphazard from a vast reservoir of possible questions, all

written on uniform square tickets. In this preface to the scheme he pauses for a moment to apologize for apparently fanciful detail. "To those," he says, "who have the faculty of extracting amusement from dry matter, it may serve as a second Utopia adapted to the circumstances of the age. . . . In the Utopia of the sixteenth century, effects present themselves without any appropriate causes; in this of the nineteenth century, appropriate causes are presented waiting for their effects" (V, 278).

In this phrase, "causes waiting for their effects," Bentham indicates the main difficulty of political invention. In the natural sciences experiment is easy. A few hours' or weeks' work in their laboratories told Ramsay or Helmholtz whether a new idea was well or ill-founded. Before any one of Bentham's ideas could be tested he had to persuade an unwilling Parliament or Cabinet to undertake a new and troublesome task. "Assemblies," as Dumont wrote to Bentham, "are proud beggars, on whom our alms must be forced" (X, 439). And, because he was compelled to invent without experiment, Bentham was at the mercy of his own ignorance on any of the thousand conditions of success in each of his problems. He accompanies his sketch of a competitive examination for entrance to the civil service by a proposal, which no one with actual experience of the control of a large body of functionaries would ever have made, for a sort of "Dutch auction" by which that person from a list of qualified candidates should be automatically appointed who offered to do the work for the least salary. The effects of the ignorance of one of the kindest-hearted men who ever lived, on some sides of practical life, are seen at their worst in his favourite Panopticon scheme for improved prison and workhouse organization. He wrote in 1791 of his proposed prison, "By mixture of employment, sedentary with laborious . . . I get sixteen and a half profitable hours [of labour from the prisoners]; very nearly twice as many as our Penitentiary systems allow" (X, 256). Under the heading "Diet" he proposes "Price—the cheapest—Savour the least palatable of any in common use. Change none

except for cheapness," or out of a prisoner's own earnings. Even when he is dealing with paupers guilty of no offence, and for whom he earnestly desires happiness, he shows a bachelor's ignorance of many of the conditions of children's happiness. He says that his pauper infants would have "great advantages . . . in comparison with those of private families—even the most opulent," and that among these advantages would be that of being "danced, as they lay in their cribs," by machinery, "in numbers at a time" (VIII, 391). In all the sections, indeed, dealing with the diet, employment, and housing of paupers one feels that Bentham's combination of ingenuity and ignorance is in part responsible for those unbearable conditions of daily existence which Chadwick, Head, and others of his followers introduced, two years after Bentham's death, into the General Mixed Workhouses of the New Poor Law.

Less obvious, but in some ways even more dangerous, was the ignorance which Bentham shared with all the professed students of psychology in his time, of some of those psychological facts which are relevant to the problem of representative government. Most people would say that Bentham's view of how a British working man would behave if one gave him a vote for Parliament was much sounder than the views of Canning and Sidmouth and Lord Eldon. But still, when one reads his *Radical Reform Catechism*, with its insistence on annual elections as a sufficient means of securing that every representative should always vote in accordance with the interests of his constituents; or his account of the future action of the newspaper press as an effective "Public Opinion Tribunal," a modern politician is conscious of a painful sense of unreality. Even in 1820, there must have been inhabitants of New York who would read with rather a wry smile Bentham's statement that "In republican America there is no punishment for free inquiry, or pretence of punishing seditious meetings and blasphemy; there is therefore no sedition there" (III, 562). And again, "Behold [in America] freedom of election—perfect and unexampled freedom; yes, freedom and with it sobriety, temperance,

tranquillity, security" (III, 472). If, in our time, there is, all over the world, a reaction against optimistic and mechanical conceptions of the working of representative democracy, Bentham and his disciples must bear part of the responsibility.

And yet, Bentham, with all his limitations and whimsicalities and mistakes, was by far the most successful political inventor whom we have produced in England. Are, then, the Dean of St. Paul's and Edmund Burke right? Is political invention too dangerous a process for even the greatest political genius to attempt? Must we leave our institutions to use and wont, and to the slow natural growth of change in unessential details? If we lived in social conditions as nearly natural as those of the last Stone Age, we might feel inclined to answer yes, just as we might then be willing to allow improvements in means of communication to come from the slow broadening by use of uninvented forest paths. But our civilization is irrevocably one of railways and machines and joint-stock companies, and all the artificialities of taxation and education—a civilization based on invention, and which can only continue to exist if we continue to invent. Any proof, therefore, that political invention, even in the hands of its greatest masters, is both difficult and dangerous, is an argument, not for abandoning political invention, but for carrying it out with greater seriousness and care. In that process Bentham's writings are still, as Dumont called them, a "mine," of which "Labour in it who will, not a hundred years will suffice for exploring and circulating its riches" (X, 451). But they are a mine which can only be worked to good effect by those who themselves are striving to invent, and who, among suggestions which have already been carried out, and others which deal with facts that have long been changed, and others which were always unworkable because Bentham, being a human being, had gaps in his knowledge and twists in his mind, are on the watch for some suggestion which will even now help to introduce a greater measure of intelligibility and harmony into the tangle of our institutions, or for some method of thought which has still not been fully used.

But, if the work of political invention is supremely necessary, how are we to secure that a sufficient number of suitable persons shall undertake it under sufficiently favourable conditions? Political inventors are no more popular among politicians or functionaries than were the inventors of textile machinery among the textile operatives of a hundred years ago, or the inventors of military reform at the Horse Guards in the days of the old Duke of Cambridge. Invention means the breaking up of comfortable habits and interference with vested interests. We should add, therefore, to Bentham's statement that among the objects of invention is the discovery of methods of invention, the further statement that we need the invention of methods of securing that suitable persons shall try to invent. The patent laws secure that industrial inventors shall be encouraged and rewarded, but no one can take out, or should be allowed to take out, a patent for the most ingenious discovery in the region of political organization. We can sometimes secure that political invention shall be undertaken as a by-product of administration or education. Lord Haldane has encouraged throughout the Government Departments the idea that staff-work is necessary for any kind of good administration, and his efforts may ultimately lead to the creation of an administrative General Staff. He has also helped to form the learned society called the Institute of Public Administration. In this room, however, we are more concerned with political invention as a by-product of university education in the political and financial metropolis of the British Empire. The buildings round that School of Economics and Political Science which was invented thirty-five years ago by Mr. and Mrs. Webb are soon to be pulled down by the London County Council in order to provide more class-rooms and special libraries and rooms where teachers and students can drink coffee and eat buns and talk "shop." And although from some hitherto unexplained cause lawyers hate inventions in their art even more thoroughly than do bricklayers, there are signs that round London University there may one day be gathered a School

of Law which will carry on Bentham's work in jurisprudence and ask, not only what law is, but what it ought to be.

Our main hope, however, must depend on a more general recognition of the need of invention as a safety-valve in our artificial civilization. The inventor, because his habits of mind are those necessary for invention, is seldom a good self-advertiser, or even a good practical politician. Bentham, in a section of his treatise on Political Economy, pleads for the adoption in England of the newly invented French expedient of limited liability companies, whereby, he says, "the most elevated classes might find an amusement in descending into the territories of industry. . . . The spirit of gaming . . . might serve to increase the productive energy of commerce and art" (III, 48). He goes on to say, with an obvious reference to his own experience, "the talent of meditating in a study and thereby making discoveries [is extremely different] from that requisite for making known those discoveries to the world. . . . The more unaccustomed an individual is to society, the greater his dread of mingling in it, the less is he at his ease—the less is he master of his faculties, when he is obliged to mingle with it. The effect produced upon the mind of the individual who has, or who supposes that he has, made a great discovery is a mixture of pride and timidity. . . . But though pride united with courage is one of the most powerful means of subjugating men, pride united with timidity is one of the most certain causes of exposure to their aversion and contempt . . . it labours in grief, in darkness, in awkwardness, embarrassment and false shame, the bugbears of love and of esteem, but the frequent and afflictive companions, and most cruel enemies of merit and solitary genius" (III, 49, 50). "And," Bentham adds, "even when he [the inventor] is not devoid of courage, there is nothing more different, though in certain points the connection may appear most intimate, than the talent of conceiving new ideas of certain kinds and the talent of developing these same ideas. Altogether occupied with the idea itself, the inventor is most frequently incapable of directing his attention to all the accessories which must be

re-united before this invention can be understood and approved" (III, 50).

In the industrial field we took Bentham's advice. We passed the Limited Liability Acts, and transformed the whole conditions of British industrial organization. But are we more likely now than we have been in the past to help the political inventor not only with a salary sufficient to pay his rent and buy his clothes, and a tolerance which stops short of dismissing him for thinking, but with sympathy and understanding? Sometimes I hope that the sheer danger of the present position of European civilization may compel us to do so. In peace the average military officer loathes the inventive type of man, who is capable of talking shop at mess, and of leaving a button of his tunic unfastened, and who has a photograph of Lord Cardwell on his chimney-piece. But in a desperate war the same officer may sometimes be glad that men exist who can invent tanks, and trench-tactics, and aeroplanes, and gas-masks. And in Europe, where half the population are now living under revolutionary Fascist or Communist dictatorships, and where no nation knows whose currency will next crash, it may be that some young Bentham in the now growing generation will find himself in middle age toiling with the help and not against the opposition and contempt of the social forces of his time.

WILLIAM JOHNSON FOX (1924)\*  
(1786-1864)

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL has now existed for exactly one hundred years. For the first twenty-eight years of that time William Johnson Fox was its Minister; and it was during his ministry that the South Place congregation acquired the character and ideals which were maintained by Fox's great successor, Moncure Conway, and which it is now hoped to transfer to the new building in Red Lion Square. I have therefore thought that you would allow me to consider, in the light of Fox's life, some of the opportunities and difficulties which face any body of men and women who, having broken with the Christian creeds, desire, as the South Place Society have desired, to carry on the Christian tradition of congregational teaching, congregational feeling, and congregational activity.

Fox was born in a Suffolk village in 1786. Social classes in eighteenth-century England were less clearly separated than they now are, and Fox's father, successively peasant-farmer, hand-loom weaver, and struggling shop-keeper, though always much poorer than a modern artisan, was nearer socially to what we should now call the middle class. When Fox was three years old the family moved to Norwich, then beginning to be the home of a vigorous intellectual and artistic life, represented by such families as Taylor, Martineau and Crome. Fox, who was a very short, thick-set, and plain-

\* The Conway Memorial Lecture, delivered at South Place Institute on March 20, 1924

Graham Wallas gave his first address at South Place in 1891, on William Lovett. He delivered some twenty-three addresses there at intervals during a period of about forty years. (ED.)

featured little boy, attended the school attached to the Independent Chapel, read omnivorously, helped his father for a time at the loom, and, at thirteen, became a clerk in a local bank. From thirteen to twenty he shared in the restless New England intellectual life so well described in "Mark Rutherford's" novels. He toiled at mathematics, he wrote verse, he read Locke on the Human Understanding, he discussed with a boy friend politics and Calvinist theology. In 1806 he felt the call to preach, and entered, shy, provincial, and unhappy, on a three years' training at the Homerton College for Dissenting Ministers. In 1810 he received his certificate, and was appointed minister at Fareham, with the duty of visiting the congregation and preaching five sermons a week. At Fareham, in spite of his five weekly sermons, he continued the theological studies which he had begun at Homerton. He used to take books on controversial theology to bed, and to read them for hours with the candle on his pillow. In two years he had become an avowed Unitarian, and was appointed minister to a tiny Unitarian congregation at Chichester.

But in the few months of his orthodox ministry Fox had made the discovery which determined the whole remaining course of his life. He was possessed of an astonishing natural gift of eloquence. Chilled by the apathy of the Chichester Unitarians, he writes, in 1813: "Shall I say, 'O that it were with me as in months past, when the candle of orthodoxy shone upon me!?' Shall I call up the times when listening crowds heard with visible emotion, when trickling tears proclaimed the vividness of the feelings, the pathos of my eloquence, the power of grace?"

There are several contemporary descriptions of Fox's eloquence. Mongredien, for instance, tells of the address which he gave at the first Covent Garden meeting of the Anti-Corn Law League in 1843, where he thrilled the audience far more deeply than either Cobden or Bright, who had spoken before him. "The moment he began to speak," says Mongredien, "he seemed another man. His large brown eyes flashed fire, and his impressive gesture added dignity to

his stature. His voice displayed a combination of power and sweetness, not surpassed even by the mellow bass of Daniel O'Connell in his prime. His command of language seemed unlimited, for he was never at a loss, not only for a word but for the right word. Not argumentative and persuasive like Cobden, or natural and forcible as Mr Bright, his *forte* lay in appealing to the emotions of his audience; and in this branch of the rhetorician's art his power was irresistible." Two years earlier James Grant wrote that "he never hesitates, never stammers, and very rarely has occasion to recall a word. To address his audience seems to him the easiest and most natural thing in the world." Froude, in his *Short Studies*, describing Fox's speech on Education to an audience of seven or eight thousand, in the Manchester Free Trade Hall in 1849, writes: "He talked . . . of the neglect of past generations, the besotted peasant, in whose besotted brain even thought was extinct, and whose sole spiritual instruction was the dull and dubious parson's sermon. Then came the contrasted picture: the broad river of modern discovery flowing through town and hamlet, science shining as an intellectual sun, and knowledge and justice, as her handmaids, redressing the wrongs and repealing the miseries of mankind. Then, rapt with inspired frenzy, the musical voice thrilling with transcendent emotion: 'I seem,' the orator said, 'I seem to hear again the echo of that voice which rolled over the primeval chaos, saying "Let there be Light."' As you may see," says Froude, "a breeze of wind pass over standing corn, and every stalk bends, and a long wave sweeps across the field, so all that listening multitude swayed and wavered under the words."

Mr. Henry Linton, who as a young man had been an early member of the South Place congregation, told me some forty years ago that when he walked out after Fox's Sunday morning address he used to feel as if his feet were raised six inches from the pavement.

In the twelve-volume memorial edition of Fox's works, which lies, with many of its pages still uncut, in the British Museum, it is possible for a student of the psychology of

oratory to examine the means, other than voice and gesture, by which Fox produced these tremendous emotional effects. Much was done by a form and arrangement corresponding closely to that of a musical composition. The editors of his works speak of "his method of building up his arguments and illustrations in a series of culminating passages." He followed, that is to say—at first, one supposes, by an unconscious sense of rhythm, and later perhaps with conscious artistry—a pattern of speech more commonly used nowadays in America than in England. It forms, like the corresponding pattern in musical composition, a crescendo of slightly varied and gradually lengthening repetition (often consisting of successions of three clauses or of three nearly synonymous words), ending with a quiet and somewhat unexpected finale. As mere sound-pattern it may be compared to the process by which a great Polish actress once moved an English audience to tears by reciting a section of the Polish multiplication table.

In this type of oratory the thought follows the same pattern as the sound, and those thoughts are most effective which are simple in themselves, but whose varied expression produces, like the thought behind a Beethoven sonata, a feeling of infinite significance. Such are the thoughts which again and again inspire Fox's eloquence—the purposes of Nature, the principle of freedom, the hopes of reason and progress, the solidarity of mankind, the truth which underlies all religions. Those of us who a generation ago heard Mrs. Annie Besant's social addresses will remember that form of speech, and its effect when brought to bear by a sincere and naturally gifted orator upon an audience prepared to receive it.

One can take as an instance of Fox's method a passage from his celebrated speech for the Anti-Corn Law League at Covent Garden on September 28, 1843. "Free Trade principles," he says, "are the dictates of Nature, plainly written on the surface of land and ocean," and proceeds: "For that Power which stretched abroad the land, poured forth the ocean, and piled up the mountains; that Power

which gave Western America its broad prairies and reared the gigantic and boundless forests of the North ; that Power which covered with rich vineyards the smiling hills of France, which wafts sweet odours from the spicy shores of Araby the blest, which has endowed this country with its minerals and its insular advantages, and its people with their indomitable Anglo-Saxon energy, with their skill, their hardihood, their perseverance, their enterprise—that Power, which doth all this, evidently designed it for the common good, for the reciprocal advantage of all ; it intended that all should enrich all by the freest interchange, thus making the world no longer the patrimony of a class, but the heritage and the paradise of humanity.” If one turns from the study of a paragraph to examine the whole structure of one of Fox’s addresses, one often finds the same pattern of speech and thought upon the larger scale.

For four years, from 1813 to 1817, Fox stayed on at Chichester, reading and thinking, perfecting his skill in speech, losing his provincial accent, and gradually becoming known as an orator by visits to other Unitarian congregations. Then he came to London, and succeeded Vidler—who had succeeded Winchester, the American Universalist—at the chapel in Parliament Court, Bishopsgate, whose name once caused an American biographer to claim that Winchester had been in the habit of preaching before the British High Court of Parliament

In 1817 there had been two years of peace after the long war with France. It was a time of severe economic disorganization and distress ; and a repressive Government was in power. But the intellectual apathy of the war was at an end, and England was entering upon the most remarkable period of intellectual activity in her history, with the possible exception of that which followed the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Byron and Scott, Keats and Shelley, were starting a new era in poetry, Humphry Davy and Faraday were re-creating chemistry and physics, William Smith had just published his great geological map. Above all, Jeremy Bentham, still young at sixty-eight, was at the height of his

amazing fertility, and was surrounded by a group of disciples and co-workers who were helping to create, by discussion with their master, and out of Bentham's formless manuscripts, no less a structure than the system of local and central government under which we now live.

During the dark years of the war, the small body of English Unitarians had played an astonishingly large part in keeping, at the constant risk of violence or of imprisonment, thought and the hope of progress alive. To realize this one only had to remember the names of Priestley, Price, Coleridge, and Palmer, all of whom had at one time been Unitarian ministers. Now that the war was over, the Unitarian congregations in the manufacturing towns were still training far more than their share of courageous and industrious local progressive politicians and administrators ; but in London Unitarianism seems to have been passing through a somewhat quiet and conservative stage. Dr. Southwood Smith, however, the close associate of Bentham and intellectual father of the English system of public health, had been a Unitarian preacher. With him, and through him with Bowring and the young John Stuart Mill, Fox soon formed intimate friendships ; and when the Bentham group started the *Westminster Review* in 1824 Fox was asked to write the first article.

In 1824 Fox moved to the new chapel in South Place, built for him by the Bishopsgate congregation. He was Foreign Secretary of the Unitarian Association, and was recognized as one of the chief leaders of the movement. During the Reform agitation of 1831-32 he spoke often in the open air, and Francis Place, who was no bad judge of courage, said that the little preacher was "the bravest of us all." Already it was clear that Fox might, if he desired it, occupy a position as orator of the Liberal party, not unlike that which Mr. W. J. Bryan occupies as orator of the Democratic party in the United States. But the dignity and significance of Fox's life comes from the fact that he steadily strove to make himself something other and better than the orator either of a party or of a sect.

Thomas Carlyle came to know Mill in 1831, and Mill seems to have urged him to know his friend Fox. Carlyle, at first, having had his fill of spell-binding sermons in Scotland, shrank back "I never," he wrote to Mill in 1832, "could make much of Unitarians; from the great Channing downwards there is a certain mechanical metallic *deadness* at the heart of all of them; rhetorical clangour enough, but no fruits for me. . . . But let us, in all conscience, *look first* I know Fox only by his political speeches, the lowest class of human composition, and these very ill reported." Carlyle was already struggling, as we of the twentieth century are struggling, to find some basis of hope for human progress which should not require a belief in the automatic perfection of the method of electioneering as a means of revealing a voice of the people which should also be the voice of God. Fox was always the optimistic democrat of 1832, whose political creed was often as simple as that of Shelley or John Bright.

But Fox, though rhetoric was his natural mode of self-expression, was well aware of the dangers of the preacher's life. In 1817 he had refused to go through any ceremony that "might look like ordination," owing to "its tendency to transform a preaching brother into a priest." At Fareham he had already come to hate the whole atmosphere of a clergyman's daily intercourse with a pious congregation. "You can't think," he wrote, "how heartily I loathe the spiritual conversation, as they call it, of the good folks. A nauseous chit-chat, half scandal and half pure nonsense, is its common composition." Almost from the beginning of his life as a minister he had kept up a connection with the lay press, and when he bought in 1831 the *Monthly Repository* from the Unitarian British and Foreign Association he dropped the reference to theology from its title.

The cause, however, which finally separated Fox and his congregation from the Unitarian body and from Nonconformist tradition was his claim for a lay man's freedom, not only in expressing his opinions, but also in regulating his own life. Fox had married in 1820, and had had three children.

His marriage was almost from the beginning unhappy. He came, after his migration to London, to know Benjamin Flower and his two gifted and enthusiastic daughters: Eliza Flower the musical composer, and Sarah the poetess. The Flowers were friends of Mrs. Taylor, friend and afterwards wife of John Stuart Mill and a member of Fox's congregation. They also brought Robert Browning, as a "boy-poet," to know Fox, and in 1838 Browning wrote that Fox was "a magnificent and poetical nature, who used to write in reviews when I was a boy, and to whom my verses at the ripe age of twelve and thirteen were shown, which verses he praised not a little. Then I lost sight of him for years and years; then I published anonymously a little poem, which he, to my inexpressible delight, praised and expounded in a gallant article in a magazine of which he was the editor; then I found him out again; he got a publisher for *Paracelsus* (I read it to him in manuscript), and is, in short, my literary father."

In 1829 Benjamin Flower died, and Fox became trustee for the daughters. Eliza sang in the choir at South Place, and she and her sister produced, with Fox's help, the South Place Hymnal. In those days there were no women typists, and Eliza, by her services as secretary and shorthand writer, enabled Fox to maintain his constant output of articles and published addresses. She also helped with the education of his children, one of whom was deaf and dumb. Both sisters were already stricken with the consumption which scourged the home-keeping Englishwomen of that time, and both died about a dozen years later. After Benjamin Flower's death both sisters came to live in Fox's house. Soon Fox and Eliza Flower found that they had fallen deeply in love with each other. They determined to meet the situation as Mill and Mrs. Taylor met their situation by an avowed but Platonic affection. After Sarah's marriage in 1834 to Mr. Bridges Adams, Eliza stayed on in Fox's household. Mrs. Fox had meanwhile complained to certain members of the South Place congregation, who remonstrated with Fox. Fox at once offered his resignation, and afterwards at the request of a

majority of the congregation withdrew it. In a letter to the congregation he said: "Whatever may have been the trial of my domestic life through many years, to whose or to what fault (if fault there be) they are owing, are questions on which only continued and close intimacy can justify any one in forming an opinion. Assuredly they are not fit subjects for argument before congregational authorities." Forty-three out of 156 seat-holders left the chapel after the decision, but others took their place.

At the same time Fox, in the *Monthly Repository* and elsewhere, publicly advocated the principle of divorce for incompatibility of temperament, and on that ground the other five metropolitan Unitarian ministers separated from communion with him. Fox about the time of this incident ceased to call himself "reverend," to administer the sacraments, or to visit the congregation as part of his duty. He became definitely a lay teacher, and took regular journalistic work on the *True Sun*, writing daily the leading articles and the literary and dramatic criticisms. He came back after writing his first leader and said to Eliza Flower: "There, I feel like an honest man who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow." His Sunday addresses at South Place took a constantly wider range of subjects, and were delivered without Biblical texts. Besides his address at South Place, he spoke weekly, for two years from 1844, to a working-class audience in the National Hall of the Working Man's Association in Holborn. In these addresses, and in the many journals with which he was connected, he pleaded for the Chartist political programme, for public education, for free trade, and for the principles of pacifism and self-determination in international affairs.

Three years after Fox's death the Reform Bill of 1867 was passed, and England definitely became a democratic state. The history text-books are apt to treat that step as part of an inevitable process of evolution. But it would have seemed just as inevitable if England, with her great Empire and her firmly established governing class, had become such a Power as Bismarck and his successors tried to make of Imperial

Germany. The tens of thousands of democratic speeches which were delivered, and democratic newspaper articles which were written between 1832 and 1867, and which slowly created a middle-class opinion capable of co-operating with English working-class aspirations, were by no means wasted labour.

On one subject—the political, intellectual, and social enfranchisement of women—Fox's intimate friendship with John Stuart Mill and Mrs. Taylor, and the circumstances of his own life, gave his thought a certain fullness and modernity of content which a twentieth-century politician does not always find in his more general pleas for democracy and liberty. Perhaps his best statement of the case for women's suffrage is contained in an address to the Working Man's Association, delivered apparently in 1844. He refers to a recent debate on a motion to allow women to listen in a barred gallery to the speeches in the House of Commons. "I recollect," he says, "the affected and tinsel gallantry with which it was advocated, the carelessness with which it was received, and the hollowness and factitiousness of the whole proceedings—the want on all sides of any real respect for women." He declares, as against the argument that women are "virtually represented" by the votes of men, that "in many cases the interests of men and women are not the same. They are not the same in the case of a married woman earning money, and who, like Mrs. Siddons, after having accumulated a fortune by her exertions, may yet have no legal right or power in the disposal of her own industry and genius, but, like that great actress, be obliged to ask a husband who has been living on the results of her laborious exertions not to leave her dependent after his death." He refers to the respectful way in which women were mentioned in the introductory address which was published with the People's Charter, and says: "Hereafter, when all this nonsense shall have passed away—when those who can now vote, not only in parochial contests, but at the East India House, upon matters affecting the government of many millions of human beings, will also exercise the same rights in the election of

members of the British Parliament. . . . I believe that there will be a grateful recollection of the fact that at a period when this question was only mentioned by other bodies with contempt and scorn the working classes of Great Britain treated it respectfully, heralded the way for its free and fair discussion, and its grave and righteous decision.' When, in 1842, the congregation celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of South Place, women for the first time sat down with men at a public dinner.

From 1839 to 1843 Fox was a leader-writer on the *Morning Chronicle*; from 1843 to 1846 he was a paid lecturer and writer for the Anti-Corn Law League; and when the League came to an end wrote that "the only comfort is to be out of that eternal one idea, and not to see Corn Law here there, and everywhere." Throughout these years he was still growing into something more than an orator. Even Carlyle, the hater of rhetoric, wrote in 1840 to Sterling: "Fox is a fine, open-souled young man; one wishes him right well in his clean, wholesome Quakerism, but sees not entirely how he is to get it kept in these times and grow as he seems minded to do. They are all good people; we saw them at Mill's" Fox was in 1840 fifty-four years old, and nine years older than Carlyle, so that the reference to his youth and to the old meetings at Mill's house shows that Carlyle now knew Fox only from his writings

In 1846 Fox found that his outside work was taking more and more of his time, and he suggested an arrangement by which he should give up half his South Place addresses. The South Place Committee desired only a continuation of the existing system, and Fox wrote that "they seem to have only two ideas in their heads—those of paying their seat-rents and having me; and find their brains exceedingly dislocated and obfuscated by any other consideration. However, they have appointed a special committee" Next year he was elected Liberal member for Oldham, and retained his seat, with intervals of a few months, until his retirement in 1862. When he entered Parliament he was already sixty years old and was beginning to suffer from heart trouble; and we are

told that his success in Parliament "was limited by the didacticism acquired in the pulpit" But he did good work in the cause of national education, and his Education Bill of 1852 represented the first attempt to put the radical educational programme into legislative form. From 1850 he practically resigned his duties at South Place, and his last discourses there were six in 1852. Towards the end of his life he was reconciled to Mrs. Fox. In 1864 ~~he~~ died, and his memorial service was held by Moncure Conway, who, after an interval of short pastorates, during which the congregation had nearly dispersed, again made South Place Chapel an important centre of London progressive thought.

Now, I might ask you to look on Fox's life as an instance of the special difficulties that attend the few possessors of the natural gift of supreme oratorical power. No one asks that Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony should be judged by the correctness of Beethoven's estimate of Napoleon's policy, or that Michael Angelo's Sistine Chapel should be judged by Michael Angelo's opinion as to the sources of the papal revenues. In the modern world, however, the only widely recognized function of a lay orator is to persuade men and women to vote for some political party or proposal, and the orator's most splendid paragraphs have to be tested by their relation to the very different process of political arithmetic and invention. Fox, far more than Charles James Fox, or Mirabeau, or John Bright, or W. J. Bryan, recognized this double function of the orator, and constantly strove to subordinate his creative impulses as an artist to that dull, unapplauded work of discovering political truth for which he was often no better and no worse fitted than many scores of inarticulate politicians and officials in his time.

But, as I said at the beginning of this address, I prefer to ask you to consider Fox's life in relation to the special problems of that type of congregational organization of which South Place under his leadership was the first model. For a hundred years men and women and growing girls and boys have come here, Sunday after Sunday; have attended

week-day addresses and concerts, and have sooner or later accepted the anxieties and responsibilities of committee administration. What have they received from their membership of the Society? What has their work done for others? Can we expect under the new conditions, now that the weekend is taking for many Londoners the place of Sunday, that such congregational activities will still be felt, by those who do not accept the supernatural claims of Christianity, to be worth while? Can we ever hope again to find a Fox or a Conway to lead such a congregation?

It would be easy to argue that the time for ethical congregational organization is past. The whole intellectual, emotional, and artistic life of our day is carried on, it may be said, on the plane of a specialized effort severer than such a congregation can aim at. If we wish to follow the philosophy or the political thought of our time, we must therefore read the books of philosophers and political thinkers rather than have those books interpreted to us in fifty-minute discourses either by a generalizing preacher or even by the thinker himself. Again, we may be told that any attempt to bring all the problems of life and art within the sphere of ethics blunts the sharp edge both of creation and of appreciation. Fox was one of the first to call attention to the poetry of Tennyson and Browning; but because he read them primarily as a moralist he admired and encouraged in them just those qualities which prevented either poet from reaching the serene heights of the greatest art. Fox was a close friend of Macready the actor-manager, and threw all his eloquence and conviction into Macready's fight for the reform of the stage. But just because Macready's standard was that rather of the moralist than of the artist, his art and Fox's praise of it are now alike forgotten. Eliza Flower's music and her sister's hymns moved the South Place congregation to tears, but their names do not appear in any list of the composers and writers of the nineteenth century. The twentieth-century Londoner will, it might be prophesied, seek satisfaction for his intellectual and emotional needs in that professional literature and professional art

which in the moment of creation has never asked itself whether it has an ethical purpose.

All this represents a real and important truth; but it does not, I believe, represent all the truth which is relevant to our problem. Men and women in this age of specialized professional achievement do not, like the steamships and engines and cannon which they produce, grow larger every decade, nor do their powers of receiving and responding to emotion extend like the range of wireless telephony. We are apt, therefore, to feel small and lonely and cold among the streets and crowds of our great cities, the perfect technique of our concert-halls and theatres, the impersonal intensity of thought in our books and laboratories and scientific journals. Some form of congregational organization might, after all, offer us something more personal and more friendly. Some of you heard the other day, with an emotion like my own, Mrs. Fletcher Smith's description of her seventy years' membership of the South Place congregation, and the warmth of experience with which she claimed that it had been her "home." May it not be that mankind in our time, living as they do, with the short-range brains and instincts of a prehistoric tribe, in the inhuman vastness of London or New York or Chicago, will begin once more to experiment in the search for opportunities of that kind of intercourse which enables friends to share without shyness or shame the expression of their hopes and feelings? An address from a speaker whom we know and trust, music which we have helped to choose, a discussion-class in which our questions can be answered, meetings to exchange thoughts with some foreign visitor, may mean more to us, especially when we are young, than the perpetual one-sided contact with books and magazines and dramas and cinemas and wireless broadcasters, none of whom can answer us back, because to none of them do we as individuals exist.

The Church of England authorities in London have officially announced that they are now unable to make any other use of most of the City churches except to pull them down and sell the sites. Is it absurd to ask whether some

day a few of these churches may be lent, on condition of their being kept in good repair, to congregations who do not belong to the Anglican Communion, but who will find in those square Jacobean rooms and galleries just the atmosphere of quiet rational beauty which most suits their mood?

Meanwhile let us look forward to the Red Lion Square experiment. The success of that experiment will depend on the congregation themselves. We can no longer expect that a single eloquent preacher will interpret every Sunday for thirty years all the problems of life to the same audience. The system by which the members of a varying panel of speakers, each of whom is living an independent intellectual life in the larger world, have found during the last twenty years, on week-days as well as on Sundays, a friendly and understanding audience in which they can recognize familiar faces, will probably continue. But the experiment at Red Lion Square will fail to succeed unless the congregation, from the first, approach it as an experiment, and apply to it the same free but concentrated effort of mind which a modern scientist brings to the work of invention. It would be well, I should like to suggest, if the new congregation would send one of the ablest of their committee to America and Germany and Scandinavia to learn what type of congregational activities have been felt to be worth while for ethical and free religious congregations. One thinks, for instance, of a "social survey" of the rather dreary little region surrounding Red Lion Square, leading perhaps to definite local activities like those undertaken, sometimes with the help of the London County Council or the local Health Authority, by the Mary Ward Settlement at Tavistock Place, half a mile to the north. The huge scale, again, of modern municipal administration requires the assistance of a constantly increasing supply of voluntary workers, and one thinks that perhaps the best school managers and members of "care committees" and of "mothers' clinics" for the district may come from Red Lion Square, and that they may be noticeable for a belief in the visible beauty of life which dates back to "Red Lion Mary" and to William Morris's

years of fertile activity in his Red Lion Square workshops. And I myself cannot forget that the new chapel, with its hall and common room and library and class-rooms, and the new seats which it will place under the trees of the Square, will be less than half a mile from the buzzing intellectual hive at the School of Economics in Houghton Street.

The monstrous and unkindly growth of London has come upon us unforeseen, like a dream. But the misfortune of man will not rest until life, even in London, has found again the possibility of warmth and meaning and beauty. And it may be that some future historian, after he has told of the effects on the material life of the nineteenth century of the discoveries of Watt and Faraday and Kelvin, may go on to tell us of certain twentieth-century discoveries in the art of organizing emotion and thought made by the inheritors of a tradition which was founded by William Johnson Fox, the most human of all great preachers.

## ROBERT OWEN (1910)

WHEN did modern Socialism begin? The question is of the same kind as 'What is the source of the Thames?' In each case one has to choose, among a number of tributary streams, that which is most important, and then try to discover the point from which that tributary may fairly be said to start. In the case of Socialism the most important tributary is pretty clearly the influence of Robert Owen, the "Father of Socialism." His followers first adopted the name Socialist; he, more than anyone else, advertised the idea, and the direct tradition of his teaching and of that of his immediate disciples can be traced in the writings of Marx and of the other originators of continental Social-Democracy. The question therefore resolves itself into the narrower inquiry, When did Robert Owen begin to teach Socialism? The answer depends, of course, on one's definition of Socialism; but yet I believe that it is possible to give a singularly definite answer which most people would accept as true. Robert Owen began to teach Socialism about a quarter to one o'clock on the afternoon of August 21, 1817, in the City of London Tavern.

Up to that moment Owen's position in the history of social movements would have been most accurately placed among the philanthropists of the type of John Bellers or Count Rumford, who advocated or attempted to create self-supporting communities for the relief of destitution. Owen indeed acknowledged in 1817 the practical identity of his community proposals with those of Bellers. Francis Place had found a copy of Bellers' tract *Proposals for Raising a*

\* First published in the *Sociological Review*, January, 1910, under the title "The Beginning of Modern Socialism." (Ed.)

*Colledge of Industry* (1696) and had given it to Owen saying, "I have made a great discovery—of a work advocating your social views a century and a half ago."\* Owen read it, and found that the Colleges proposed by Bellers were co-operative villages on a plan curiously similar to that which he himself had just drawn up for the philanthropic "Committee of the Association for the Relief of the Manufacturing and Labouring Poor." Owen therefore reprinted and ~~circulated~~ the tract, saying, "I have no claim even to priority in regard to the combinations of these principles in theory; this belongs as far as I know to John Bellers" (*ibid.*, Ia, 76).

But any definition of modern Socialism must include the two ideas that the economic co-operation proposed should be universal (i.e., not confined to destitute persons), and that the movement for bringing it about should be democratic, acting from below, and not aristocratic, acting from above. Before August 21, 1817, Owen's conception of his plan was still partial (though he was rapidly coming to think of it as universal) and the forces on which he relied were to come entirely from above. After that date he had put himself in a position which made it inevitable for him henceforward to look for support among working men and Radicals, and to advocate his plan as a social revolution instead of a cure for destitution.

Yet the new thing that happened at the City of London Tavern meeting, "to which Owen himself was accustomed to refer as the turning-point of his life,"† was his public declaration, not of his economic, but of his religious opinions.

This statement becomes intelligible if one considers the moment at which Owen's declaration was made. It would be extremely valuable if some student would take, say, as the subject of a thesis for the D.Sc. the economic and intellectual history of the year 1817 in England. From the frightful social distress of that year, combined with the stirring of heart and brain among men brought up in a quarter of a century of warfare, and now for the first time

\* *Life of Robert Owen*, by himself, Vol. I, p. 240.

† Podmore, *Life of Robert Owen*, Vol. I, p. 247 (George Allen & Unwin Ltd.).

with leisure to observe and to pity, sprang both the Socialism and the individualist Political Economy of the nineteenth century. Perhaps there is no year in English history, certainly there is no year since 1649, in which men thought with such freedom and such intensity.

But just because so many men were in that year thinking for themselves, the issues would seem to a man of the twentieth century to have been singularly confused. The present alliance between political and religious conservatism and economic individualism had hardly yet come into existence, nor had the opposing alliance between the desire for democracy and the desire for social change. Bishops and Royal Princes and capitalists were willing to consider with an open mind the boldest schemes of social reform; while the Radical agitators, headed for the moment in London by "Orator" Hunt, Major Cartwright, Alderman Waithman, and John Gale Jones, were apt to be individualists. In so far as any grouping of parties in that respect consciously existed (and there were of course a good many cases of cross division, like that of Spence, the Radical Land Nationalizer, and Gale Jones himself) Owen had hitherto been considered to be on the side of the bishops and the philanthropists against the democrats and the political economists.

Owen held two meetings at the City of London Tavern in 1817. The first was called at noon on August 14th to consider his community plan, which those political economists who dominated the House of Commons Committee then sitting on Poor Relief had refused to receive in evidence. Alderman Waithman, with Torrens (who was trying to get himself known as a political economist), came to oppose. Waithman moved an amendment in favour of parliamentary reform and the abolition of the war taxes. The chairman's ruling that the amendment was lost was received with protests, and the meeting was adjourned in some confusion. It was at the adjourned meeting, called for noon on August 21st, that Owen determined to make a public announcement of his religious heterodoxy.

It is a remarkable sign of that remarkable time that though the first meeting had demonstrated that Owen was, as Leslie Stephen called him, "one of those intolerable bores who are the salt of the earth," yet both were crowded. *The Times*, not perhaps uninfluenced by the fact that Owen had announced his intention of buying 30,000 copies at sevenpence each, gave a long report of both meetings.

Owen's words in making his declaration on religion were read from his manuscript as follows:

"It may now be asked, 'If the new arrangements proposed really possess all the advantages that have been stated, why have they not been adopted in universal practice during all the ages which have passed?' 'Why should so many countless millions of our fellow-creatures, through each successive generation, have been the victims of ignorance, of superstition, of mental degradation, and of wretchedness?' My friends, a more important question has never yet been put to the sons of men! Who *can* answer it? Who *dare* answer it—but with his life in his hand; a ready and willing victim to truth, and to the emancipation of the world from its long bondage of disunion, error, crime and misery?"

"Behold that victim! On this day—in this hour—even now—shall those bonds be burst asunder, never more to reunite while the world shall last. What the consequences of this daring deed shall be to myself, I am as indifferent about as whether it shall rain or be fair to-morrow. Whatever may be the consequences, I will now perform my duty to you, and to the world; and should it be the last act of my life, I shall be well content, and know that I have lived for an important purpose."

"Then, my friends, I tell you, that hitherto you have been prevented from knowing what happiness really is, solely in consequence of the errors—gross errors—that have been combined with the fundamental notions of every religion that has hitherto been taught to men. And in consequence they have made man the most inconsistent and the most miserable being in existence. By the errors of these systems he has been made a weak, imbecile animal; a furious bigot

and fanatic; or a miserable hypocrite; and should these qualities be carried, not only into the projected villages but into Paradise itself, a Paradise would be no longer found. . .

“Now, my friends, I am content that you call me an infidel; that you esteem me the most worthless and wicked of all the human beings who have yet been born; still, however, even this will not make what I say one jot less true.”

When writing of the incident in his old age, he said ·

“When I went to this meeting, ever to be remembered in the annals of history, no one except myself had any notion of what I intended to do or say in the part of the address alluded to. . . .

“My own expectations were that such a daring denunciation in opposition to the deepest prejudices of every creed, would call down upon me the vengeance of the bigot and superstitious, and that I should be torn to pieces in the meeting. But great was my astonishment at what followed. A pause ensued, of the most profound silence, but of noiseless agitation in the minds of all—none apparently knowing what to do or how to express themselves. All seemed thunderstruck and confounded. My friends were taken by surprise, and were shocked at my temerity, and feared for the result. Those who came with the strongest determination to oppose me, had, as they afterwards stated to me, their minds changed as it were by some electric shock, and the utmost mental confusion seemed to pervade the meeting, none venturing to express their feelings; and had I not purposely paused and waited some demonstration from the audience, I might have continued my address in the astonished silence which I had produced. But when I did not proceed, and while I evidently waited for some expression of the feeling of the audience, after the long pause in silence, about half-a-dozen clergymen, who had attentively listened to all I had said, deemed it incumbent upon them on account of their profession to attempt to lead the meeting by a few low hisses. But these, to my great astonishment, were instantly rebutted by

\* *Life of Robert Owen*, by himself, Vol. Ia, pp 115-16.

the most heartfelt applause from the whole of the meeting, with the exception stated, that I ever witnessed, before or since, as a public demonstration of feeling. I then said to the friends near me—‘the victory is gained. Truth openly stated is omnipotent.’

“I then proceeded, and finished my address, which was again loudly cheered. A long debate followed, by those who desired to defeat my proposed resolution; but it was evident that a great majority of the meeting who had been present from its commencement desired the resolution to be carried, for the appointment of a Committee to investigate my plans for the relief of the poor.

“My opponents seeing this, now sent out their emissaries to bring in numbers to fill the places of those gradually retiring, and the political economists, whose leaders were there, determined to speak against time, and to keep the meeting open until the workpeople could be brought, when coming from their work at seven o’clock, to vote without knowledge of what had been said or done. By this time the respectable part of the audience had been tired out, or had left and gone to their dinner. I had accomplished my object and was now indifferent what became of the resolution, knowing that for a considerable time I had destroyed my popularity with those who had been taught to believe and not to *think*, and these were legion. When the vote was taken, there was great confusion, for much excitement had been created by those who were opposed to giving real and permanent relief to the poor and working classes. Even at the conclusion the majority were decidedly in my favour; but, to terminate the meeting peaceably, I decided that the resolution was negatived, and then terminated the meeting.

“I have from that day to this considered that day the most important of my life for the public: the day on which bigotry, superstition, and all false religions, received their death-blow. For from that day to this they have been gradually losing their strength and power, and dying their natural death in all advanced minds over the world, and soon they will cease to make the human race irrational,

divided, and wicked, and to retain them in ignorance of God or nature, of themselves, and of the road to wisdom and happiness. . . .

“Few, if any, had the slightest idea of the effects which these proceedings were to produce over the public mind of the world. Their influence commenced immediately, has continually increased from that day to this, and will continue to increase until the old system of the world shall cease from the earth, and truth, charity, and wisdom, shall govern the human race to the end of time.”\*

He relates (*ibid*, p. 164) that Henry Brougham met him the next day, and said, “How the devil, Owen, could you say what you did yesterday at your meeting! If any of us” (meaning the then so-called Liberal Party in the House of Commons) “had said half as much, we should have been burned alive and here are you walking about as if nothing had occurred.”

Torrens wrote a description of the meetings to Place in a letter which Place’s great-grandson, Dr. H. A. Miers, the Principal of London University, has found among some family papers overlooked when I was writing Place’s Life. I give it here with Torrens’s slightly irregular spelling unchanged.

LONDON,

*September the 11th, 1817.*

MY DEAR SIR,

Though I am the worst and most negligent correspondent under the sun I nevertheless feel an irresistible impulse to take up my pen for the purpose of conveying my kind respects and of giving you what I conceive will be somewhat interesting an account of the proceeding of that maniac Robert Owen. The transactions of the first meeting were given with tolerable accuracy by the newspapers Rowcroft† whom Owen states to be better acquainted with the forms of public meetings than any person in London made the very worst chairman I ever saw. The best part of his conduct was his telling Hunt he would pull his nose. The four first resolutions, being merely declaratory of the existence of distress, were carried

\* *Life of Robert Owen*, by himself, Vol I, pp. 160-63.

† Sc. Rowcroft, the Chairman.

with the concurrence of Owen's opponents. I think there was an evident majority against Waithman's amendment; but on his demanding a division the confusion became so excessive that an adjournment became necessary. However if there was, on the first day, a small majority, not for Owen's plan, but against mixing up his principles with political matter, the case was very different on the adjourned meeting, when Major Cartwright and Waithman had a majority of at least ten to one Owen, as on the former day, commenced by reading a tedious, flat, and absurdly egoistical address, in which he went over all his old assertions without accompanying them with any proof or explanation, and without attempting to reply to the numerous objections which had been urged against his plans. Every person, however, was impressed with a feeling of respect for the pure benevolence of his intentions; and, if the first part of his address excited no applause, it was heard without interruption. Towards the close a most extraordinary spectacle was exhibited. When Owen proceeded to proclaim universal liberty of conscience, and to denounce all the Religions which have ever been taught on earth, an electric shock was communicated to the assembly, and from every part of the room spontaneous shouts of astonishment and applause burst forth. The scene was certainly the most unexpected and extraordinary which I ever witnessed. The cheering was nearly universal but some of it equivocal and deceitful. In the part of the room near where I sat several persons while they shouted "Hear!" "Hear!" cried "now we understand him," "now he speaks out," "let him go on," "give him rope enough."

Another remarkable circumstance as marking the degree of intelligence amongst the people, was, that Mr. Tucker, a journeyman as I understand, got up, and made an admirable speech; in which he expounded, with great accuracy and judgment, those principles of political economy which are in opposition to Owen's plans. I listened to this speech with a mingled feeling of surprise and pleasure, and I must add that all my respect and kindness for Owen, as a benevolent man, could not restrain some movements of indignation at his daring arrogance in charging with brutal ignorance and stupidity, a people from amongst the labouring classes of which such admirable displays of intellect are dayly breaking forth. The spread of knowledge is the most auspicious circumstance in the signs of the times. The sun of truth is already above the horizon, and I am firmly persuaded that no

political Joshua will ever be gifted with the power to cause it to stand still. Every speaker at the meeting, with the exception of Gale Jones, opposed Owen's plan. Poor Gale was cried down, and Owen rose to request that his *only advocate* might be heard. This identifying himself with Gale Jones excited considerable disgust, and Owen himself was now hissed and clamoured down. Waithman's resolutions were then carried by a vast majority; and Owen's campaign ended in the most complete defeat. Never was failure more decisive and entire. Yet he still goes on.

"Destroy his web of sophistry in vain  
The creature's at his dirty work again."

Indeed, his statement of yesterday, in which he asserts that the adjourned meeting was more favourable to him than his most sanguine wishes could have anticipated is the most bare faced and impudent thing which ever appeared in print I shall not attempt to decide whether it is composed of wilful falsehoods, or of the vain imaginings of a disordered intellect But as I feel a strong repugnance to believe that Robert Owen is a knave, my inclination is still to consider him as an interesting enthusiast in whose brain a copulation between vanity and benevolence has engendered madness.

My first speech at the London Tavern was as usual with me, given with too much heat and agitation In the second I believe I considerably corrected these faults. Both, except the figures, and a scrap of poetical exordium, were entirely extemporary and what I conceived to be the best part of the second, that which related to the effects of machinery, had not even been previously arranged in my mind But though my vanity whispers that I have made some improvement in the art of speaking yet when I listen to the easy and rapid flow of Wooler's words I admire and despair.

I request that Mr. Bentham and Mr. and Mrs. Mill will accept the assurance of my esteem and respect and I must now conclude the longest epistle which I have written these twelve months by subscribing myself with the same feelings,

My dear sir,  
Always yours,  
R. TORRENS.

P.S—I called upon Brougham the day before yesterday to say that my review of Ricardo's Book was ready and to know whether

Malthus was engaged by the Edinburgh on that work. He could not give me any answer but said he would write to Jeffery on the subject. I hope you are making notes on Ricardo as I shall be very anxious to compare your observations and conclusions with my own. On many points I do not agree with Ricardo but of the general merit and originality of his work I have a very high opinion.

Mr. Place.

But, though Owen's declaration marks the beginning of modern Socialism, it was not for some years that the alliance showed itself between Owenism and Radicalism which made Socialism a political force in England. After August 21, 1817, Owen was still a friend of the Duke of Kent, and still looked for support among the aristocracy, though as Mr. Podmore says:

"The effect of Owen's frankness was seen in the attitude of the Press. The *Times*, which up to this point had continued to speak with enthusiasm of Owen's philanthropy, and had more than once expressed a desire to see his scheme fairly tried, opened its leader of August 22nd with the significant words—'The curtain dropt yesterday upon Mr. Owen's drama, not soon, it is probable, to be again lifted up.'"

The thoughtful working men, to whom Owen soon found that he could appeal with most success, were still for some years divided between the voluntary communists and co-operators who followed Owen and were suspicious of democracy, and the democrats who were suspicious of Owenism. It was not till the height of the Reform agitation of 1831 that the "British Association for promoting Co-operative Knowledge" became the social-democratic "National Union of the Working Classes,"\* and not till 1838, at the beginning of the Chartist movement, that Bronterre O'Brien wrote in the *Northern Star* "All the more intelligent Socialists are becoming Radicals and all the more intelligent Radicals are becoming Socialists."†

\* Wallas, *Life of Francis Place*, p. 271 (George Allen & Unwin Ltd.).

† *Northern Star*, June 23, 1838.

## JOHN RUSKIN (1907)\*

AS LONG as Ruskin lived, his dread of the causes and results of cheapness prevented his books, even when they were addressed to the poor and the indifferent, from being bought by any but the rich or those who were already in spirit his disciples. Now, seven years after his death, the expiration of copyright, combined with improvements in the mechanical arts of paper-making and printing, have made it possible to sell tens of thousands of copies of works whose original editions sold in hundreds. These lectures, therefore, delivered fifty years ago, and published for the first time in 1859, make in 1907 their appeal to a new and vaster audience.

The intervening half century has changed the character of that appeal. In the middle of Queen Victoria's reign not even Ruskin could altogether avoid sharing the transient feelings of each year on the year's events. No one now thinks of the Crimean war as a series of "victories," nor of the crushing of the Sepoy mutiny as the righteous "avenging" for the "bestial degradation of the Indian race." Much of the Victorian art which Ruskin attacked is now almost forgotten. It is no longer true that an artist asked to paint the wall of a palace room would "cover it with a diaper," and it is no longer "modern" to make stained-glass windows in churches "of strips of twisted red and yellow bands, looking like the patterns of currant jelly on the tops of Christmas cakes." During our generation the history of art has been rewritten. No one now ascribes the Bayeux tapestries to Queen Matilda. The *Apollo Belvedere* is no longer for us the type of Greek sculpture. Even the de-

\* First published as an Introduction to the first cheap edition  
Ruskin's *The Two Paths* (Cassell, 1907). (Ed.)

velopment of Italian painting, to the study of which Ruskin brought so much devotion and insight, is seen from a different point of view. The simple and dramatic story of the ideals and achievements of Leonardo, Titian, Raphael, Tintoretto, Salvator Rosa, and the rest has become more complex and less personal now that archaeologists have transferred pictures from greater to lesser names, and have explained the methods of sixteenth-century studios. Above all, the faith in the continued vitality of Gothic architecture, and in the possibility of its direct employment towards the regeneration of England, which irradiates so many eloquent pages in *The Two Paths*, has now passed away. Anyone who desires to know further what that faith was ought to read the chapter on "The Nature of Gothic," in Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*. "To some of us," wrote William Morris in 1892, "when first we read it, now many years ago, it seemed to point out a new road on which the world should travel."

In 1906 I was a member of the committee whose duty it was to arrange for the building of a new County Hall on the southern bank of the Thames. I had been staying in Bruges, and my mind was filled with memories of the high-gabled roofs, the pointed windows, the climbing fantasies of sculpture, which look on the canals and market places of old Flanders. I sought out one or two of those artists and builders who lived in the inheritance of Ruskin's teaching, and asked whether a Gothic County Hall on the Thames were not possible. Each of them answered me in the same words, "Gothic is dead."

Ruskin, in the years of these lectures, was helping to superintend the building of the Gothic Museum at Oxford. When he contrasted the cold elegance of the Whitehall Banqueting Chamber with the intimate stimulus which comes from representation of natural facts hammered out by the consciously imperfect art of architect or stonemason, he was thinking, not of the old Gothic only, but of the new. The Oxford Museum still stands, and the question which Ruskin asked about Whitehall comes home to us as we see

it. "Do you think that the lovers in our 'Oxford' walk by the front of the 'Museum' for consolation when mistresses are unkind; or that any person was ever confirmed in purpose or in creed by the pathetic appeal" of those carved ferns and beasts?

The "poor and common knowledge of principles of building," which Ruskin, in his lecture to the Architectural Association, so strangely scorned, has since shown itself to possess unexpected difficulty and importance. And we, who are the children of our own time, are now impelled to place on our most carefully constructed buildings only such representations of natural forms as can be fashioned with all the skill and dignity of which our artists are capable.

The readers, therefore, of *The Two Paths* must persevere now approach its artistic teaching not as disciples, expecting to learn at once what to do and how to do it, but in the more difficult spirit of historic sympathy. Approached in that spirit, the book will always be a source of delight and instruction and encouragement. This is the way in which was uttered the first effective protest against the ugliness, the monotony, and the grime which accompanied the expansion of manufacturing industry during the nineteenth century. Art, for Ruskin, meant not the objects collected in Bond Street shops and Hyde Park exhibitions, but the life and purpose and surroundings which make possible the creation of undying beauty. Even in 1858 he could look right through the paper returns of leaping and bounding trade which hid from most men of that time the sight of blackened valleys and wasted childhood. England for him was not a row of figures, but a land over every county of which he had travelled as a child. The English people were not a mere personification of commercial prosperity, but millions of men and women, young and old, to whose individual struggles and aspirations he was yearly coming nearer in sympathy and knowledge. Since 1854 he had been teaching drawing to the young artisans at the Working Men's College. There, and in his studies of Italian craft, he had learnt to loathe the easy social arithmetic which made the "pain"

of the week's toil exactly balance the "pleasure" of the week's wages.

Perhaps, indeed, one can best sum up the purpose which underlay all Ruskin's best teaching on art by saying that he recalled to men's minds the possible worth and happiness of the ordinary working day. William Morris was Ruskin's noblest and most fruitful disciple, and I may quote from his introduction to *The Nature of Gothic*: "For the lesson which Ruskin here teaches us is that art is the expression of man's pleasure in labour; that it is possible for man to rejoice in his work, for, strange as it may seem to us to-day, there have been times when he did rejoice in it; and, lastly, that unless man's work again becomes a pleasure to him, the token of which will be that beauty is once again a natural and necessary accompaniment of productive labour, all but the worthless must toil in pain, and therefore live in pain."

*The Two Paths* was published at that moment of transition in Ruskin's life when he was ceasing to be chiefly a critic of art, and was becoming chiefly a prophet and teacher of social change. The essentials of his art teaching may, perhaps, be better studied in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) and *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53). His social teaching was worked out with greater detail and force in *Unto this Last* (1862). Here both are seen together.

The change was to cost Ruskin dear. Each successive book thenceforward was met with a storm of abuse and ridicule. Frightened editors refused to print articles which they had already accepted. His aged father and mother were bewildered and angry: a fact which other men might have taken lightly, as the necessary result of intellectual independence, but which to Ruskin was an abiding sorrow.

Above all, he was compelled, year after year and month after month, to submit himself to that cruel indignation which is the heaviest burden to be borne by the lovers of mankind. Turn to Ruskin's description in *The Two Paths* of the ruin of ancient beauty round Rochdale, and his reconstruction of

the glory of Pisa.\* It is one of the most splendid passages in English literature. What did it mean to the most sensitive soul in England thus to press out the last drop of agony from a vision which other men would have striven to forget? Or turn to the page where he asks: "Have you ever deliberately set yourself to imagine and measure the suffering, the guilt, and the mortality caused, necessarily, by the failure of any large dealing merchant or largely branched bank?" and the passage following, in which he does deliberately set himself to that grim task. There were, indeed, other causes besides the accident of inherited constitution which led to the depression and the recurrent mental illness of Ruskin's last years.

We must, it is true, approach Ruskin's social teaching, as well as his teaching on art, in the spirit, not of discipleship, but of historic sympathy. No single thinker can construct or reconstruct a whole science in one lifetime, and there

Just outside the town I came upon an old English cottage or mansion, I hardly know which to call it, set close under the hill, and beside the river, perhaps built somewhere in the Charles's times, with mullioned windows and a low arched porch . . . . There, uninhabited for many and many a year, it had been left in unregarded havoc of ruin; the garden gate still swung loose to its latch, the garden blighted utterly into a field of ashes, not even a weed taking root there, the roof torn into shapeless rents; the shutters hanging about the windows in rags of rotten wood, before its gate, the stream which had gladdened it now soaking slowly by, black as ebony, and thick with curdling scum, the bank above it, trodden into unctuous, sooty slime far in front of it, between it and the old hills, the furnaces of the city foaming forth perpetual plague of sulphurous darkness; the volumes of their storm clouds coiling low over a waste of grassless fields, fenced from each other, not by hedges, but by slabs of square stone, like gravestones, riveted together with iron.

That was your scene for the designer's contemplation in his afternoon walk at Rochdale. Now fancy what was the scene which presented itself, in his afternoon walk, to a designer of the Gothic school of Pisa—Nicola Pisano, or any of his men.

On each side of the river he saw rise a line of brighter palaces, arched and pillared, and inlaid with deep red porphyry, and with serpentine, along the quays before their gates were riding troops of knights, noble in face and form, dazzling in crest and shield . . . . Opening on each side from the river were gardens, courts and cloisters, long successions of white pillars among wreaths of vine; leaping of fountains through buds of pomegranate and orange — *The Two Paths*, Cassell's edition. pp. 93-4. (Ed.)

were few economists in 1858 who could have helped Ruskin, even if he had allowed them. Working alone, he did more than anyone else to banish the dull and formalistic optimism which in his days sat in the seat of authority. But the social science of our own time, in its slow task of subdivided labour, has to seek aid from many allies for whom Ruskin had small regard. A few months before these lectures were first published, Darwin brought out his *Origin of Species*, and we do not yet know the significance for social science of that tremendous addition to man's knowledge of himself. It was beauty, the beauty of man's handiwork and of the world which he inhabits, that always and everywhere constituted for Ruskin the essential test of the value of human life. Some of us who have to learn the meaning of beauty, not from the direct vision of the artist, but from books and theories, may feel puzzled and ignorant as to its identity with the universal end of existence. We may seem to see in the activities of the engineer, the physician, the statesman, and the scientist the possibility of a quality to which no use of the word "beauty" corresponds, which yet may be their ideal as beauty was the ideal of the mediæval craftsmen. We may think that sometimes Ruskin looked for beauty, and blamed its absence, when he should have looked for that other unnamed quality, towards which some of the finest spirits of the nineteenth century were then striving.

But the roll of the centuries records from each benefactor his own gift, and Ruskin's interpretation of life and art is seen all the more clearly as one of the permanent treasures of mankind now that we begin to stand at a point of time from which its place and proportion can be fairly viewed.

^ Thirty years ago Ruskin had rooms in the college where I was an undergraduate. I heard his lectures, and for a short time saw him almost every day. His mobile lips were not yet covered by a beard, and he wore always with his precise costume that intensely blue neckcloth, which he constantly renewed. His face was that of a man who had seen, and was to see again, Hell as well as Paradise, but who yet was not stern, like Dante, but of a tender and playful humour.

## LORD SHEFFIELD ON THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD (1925)

LORD SHEFFIELD will be remembered by future generations mainly for his work on the London School Board. He was first elected in 1876, and, with the exception of a short break from 1885 to 1888, was a member of the Board till its abolition in 1904. During this long period he did far more than any other member to maintain and direct the progressive educational policy of the Board. That policy at first required not only courage but even a certain measure of audacity. No one had expected that the London School Board would be in an educational sense a revolutionary body. Mr. W. E. Forster had indeed originally suggested that the work of public elementary education in London should be taken over by those committees of Poor Law guardians who controlled the existing district schools for pauper children, and should be managed in accordance with their traditions. It was only at the last moment that a "directly elected body" was inserted in his bill, and Mr. Forster at the same time expressed his conviction that the education rate would never exceed threepence.

Lord Stanley, to use the title which in these years was most familiar, did not, it is true, originate the idea of setting the educational standard in London, alike in building and equipment and teaching staff, far beyond what the Government expected or desired. He was for a time the pupil rather

\* Published as an obituary notice in the *Manchester Guardian*, March 19, 1925. Written (according to a note by the author) about 1910.

Graham Wallas became a member of the London School Board in 1894, and was Chairman of the School Management Committee from 1897 until the abolition of the Board in 1904. (Ed.)

than the leader of John Rodgers and Mark Wilks. In particular he always used to express his gratitude to the Rev. John Rodgers, and to regret that his fame had been obscured by the coincidence of his election with that of the better-known ~~but~~, on the School Board, much less important Broad Church clergyman the Rev. William Rogers. Rodgers, Wilks, and Stanley used to be described by the older teachers and officials of the Board as forming in the early days a triumvirate who knew everything and were not far from doing everything that was done in the name of the Board. They took over the traditions of "management" which had been associated with the old Voluntary schools. They were the unpaid inspectors, the initiating officials, and in a sense the head teachers of the first London Board schools, knowing every room and every assistant and every pupil teacher.

As the number of schools increased the effort required to keep up this standard of knowledge became, of course, enormously great. Mark Wilks retired in 1888 and Rodgers died from sheer overwork in 1880. Lord Stanley remained to represent to a later generation a splendid but almost impossible ideal of administrative efficiency. He was helped in this by the possession of an amazing memory. It used to be said of him that his memory had only once failed him, and that on that occasion he had suggested the placing of a "museum cupboard" in a certain corner of a certain room in a South London school, forgetting that a stove had been put in that corner the year before. At the School Accommodation Committee he used to be able to argue, apparently with equal facility for any quarter of London, on the pressure of population, the nearness of public-houses or factories to any suggested site, and the character of any buildings which it would be necessary to pull down, all without the use of a map. His memory was not confined to administrative detail, for he would fire off at any moment a long Greek quotation, which nobody had ever dreamt of quoting before, to his neighbour at the School Management Committee, or during the dreary discussions of the religious circular in 1893-94 would suddenly announce that "all these Low

Churchmen" had fallen into some deservedly forgotten fourth-century heresy.

It was this wonderful memory, combined with his quickness of speech and manner, that often enabled him, when a member of an apparently powerless minority, to hypnotize his opponents in the endless committee discussions at the Embankment offices. But what chiefly struck his fellow-members was, not his memory, but his industry. Here was a great aristocrat with many other calls upon his time, who had been a Fellow of Balliol when they were in their cradles, and who yet toiled daily like a young commercial traveller with his reputation to make. He would come to the office at ten in the morning, after having read masses of official papers and visited a couple of outlying schools, would sit continually on committee after committee, driving the business all the time, would go without his lunch and hastily swallow a cup of tea, and would still, even though he were in poor health, be toiling at seven or eight in the evening. Someone of less enduring nerves once asked him whether he never felt the work stale and monotonous. He answered that he sometimes did so, and that then he used to go down to a school, walk through the class-rooms, and watch the possibilities of good and evil in the faces of the children until the passion for work came back to him. He, like Lord Shaftesbury, always seemed to be feeling the huge importance of that which, to other men, and particularly to almost all the members of his class, seemed to matter very little. He once described how at one of his elections a lady who had been canvassing the poorer parts of St. Pancras during the morning crossed Portland Place for the afternoon's work into the fashionable western district in which he himself lived. "West of Portland Place," she complained, "the ignorance of the inhabitants is appalling."

This sense of the importance of his work was in large part the source of his courage. Lord Stanley was indeed perhaps seen at his best at times when the ordinary human beings who formed his party were in a state of nervous apprehension, when, for instance, an election was coming on in a few weeks

and a quite formidable sum was suggested as the cost of bringing up to date one of the earlier school buildings in a crowded district. On such occasions Lord Stanley would carry, by the sheer intensity of his desire, a majority of the Board, not one other member of which perhaps thought that the expenditure under the circumstances was wise. His boundless personal force and driving power were combined with a nervous irritability that often daunted those who came in contact with him for the first time, and made him a constant source of terror to anyone, either among his friends or his opponents, who pretended to knowledge which he did not possess. His irritability lessened sometimes his influence with the ordinary good-natured member who watched him fighting furiously for some small point of procedure which everyone else was willing to give up; and during the years in which he was opposed to Mr. Diggle it used often to seem as if the parties on the London School Board were led by the two most intractable men in England. But nothing was more surprising than the ease with which Lord Stanley could, if he liked, drop his fighting mood and come forward as the great gentleman who suddenly lifted the whole discussion, even on points of religion or discipline, on to a high level of courtesy and humour. This was particularly the case where he had to deal with an opponent who was obviously behaving outrageously, and yet whom he rather liked. A speech of his on such an occasion began: "Major — is an officer and a gentleman who violates the rules of the Board as a bull might violate a china shop." And Major — from that day always retained an affection for him. But Lord Stanley was, as he once said of himself, essentially a fighting man, and his courtesy and humour generally showed themselves when he realized that fighting would take him no farther. The chairman of a committee would sometimes say: "Well, Lord Stanley, or Mr. Stanley (as he was, of course, during the greater part of his membership), are you satisfied now?" And Lord Stanley would answer: "Mr. Chairman, I will take what I can get."

It is perhaps the case that the administrative tradition

set up by John Rodgers and Lord Sheffield, and followed on many of the provincial school boards, proved in the end unsuited to the needs of a fully-developed educational system. Lord Sheffield never, for instance, learnt to look for any real intellectual initiative among the officials of the Board. "If the ratepayers of London," he would say, when anyone pleaded for the appointment of a high educational official, "cannot elect men to do their work, they do not deserve to have the work done." But in the early days of the English public educational system Lord Sheffield's example was invaluable. At that time it would have been impossible to obtain officials either with the requisite educational and administrative knowledge or with that burning faith in things unseen which is a necessary condition of the introduction of a new social idea. If the work was to be done at all it had to be done by unpaid men who could stir the imagination both of their fellow-members and of the ratepayers outside, and Lord Sheffield was probably right in his conviction that he could not have spent the years between 1876 and 1904 better than in fighting at the School Board offices for thousands of hours a year on small questions and on large, now for the substitution of a certificated teacher for an ex-pupil teacher in some Bethnal Green school, and now for those great principles of religious freedom and political equality in which the deepest fibres of his moral and intellectual being were rooted.



*Part II*

## SOCIETY AND POLITICS



## DARWINISM AND SOCIAL MOTIVE (1906)

M. R. MORLEY in his *Life of Gladstone* describes how, some thirty years ago, on a Sunday afternoon, Sir John Lubbock, with whom he and Mr. Gladstone were staying, "took us all up to the hill-top whence in his quiet country village Darwin was shaking the world."<sup>†</sup> The other day I was talking with an able and reasonably orthodox Nonconformist minister. The talk turned on Darwin, and I said that Darwin's hypothesis as to man's origin seemed to be generally accepted. "Yes," answered my friend, "we all accept it, and how little difference it makes."

Who was right, Mr. Morley or my friend? Did Darwin "shake the world" or did he make very little difference? Or did the world receive indeed a shake, but then settle down with little difference made?

On one point, even the most careless newspaper reader can, I think, detect a change in our outlook, due to the general acceptance of Darwinism. We are anxious about the preservation and improvement of our racial type. We are concerned with the birth-rate from a point of view very unlike that of those political economists who dealt a hundred years ago with the returns of the first English censuses. We trouble about the quality as well as the quantity of births. We appoint Commissions on national degeneration and read

\* A paper read to the Conference of Liberal Churches at Oxford, in April, 1906, and published in the *Inquirer* for April 28, 1906.

Graham Wallas was born a year before the publication of the *Origin of Species* (1859), and for him, as for so many of his generation, Darwinism had been one of the main intellectual influences of his youth. There is a note in his handwriting written when he was an undergraduate to the Professor of Moral Philosophy at Oxford, defending the theory of evolution against an attack by the Professor in a lecture. (ED.)

† Lord Morley's *Life of Gladstone* was published three years before this article. (ED.)

papers on "eugenics." We raise questions of conduct in this matter very different from those raised by Mr. Herbert Spencer and the other first hasty generalizers about evolution, who seemed to suggest that if shopkeepers were encouraged to compete for business and clergymen for congregations, a process of the "survival of the fittest" would automatically set in, which would rapidly improve the race without the necessity of further thought or the starting of new moral difficulties.

But though a serious discussion of the duty of the human race in the improvement of its own type would be an admirable subject for such a Conference as this, I do not intend to enter upon it now. To-day I propose to consider the relation of Darwinism to our way of approaching some of the problems affecting, during each generation, those who have been already born, and the conditions of whose birth it is therefore too late to alter. My own work, for instance, is largely concerned with education. When I read a book on education, written a hundred or even fifty years ago, I find myself in a new world of ideas. Those of our grandfathers who thought about education were apt either to believe, with James Mill, that the human child was a lump of sculptor's clay, which could be changed by the schoolmaster into any type desired, or with Rousseau, that it was a flower which would reach perfection by its own laws of growth if it were only left undisturbed. We distinguish nowadays, in a way which would have been unintelligible both to James Mill and to Rousseau, between the native qualities which we must take for granted in each individual instance, and the acquired characteristics which we can hope to change. We send our mentally deficient children to special schools, without hope that they can be made normal, and construct scholarship systems for the purpose, not of making clever children, but of discovering them. We expect in our schools to do much in improving the habits of attention and discipline, and almost nothing in improving the native powers of memory and apprehension.

In the same way, when we deal with the facts of our own

moral nature as disclosed by introspection, our acceptance of what we roughly call Darwinism seems likely to change the whole conditions of the problem of personal ethics. Instincts are evolved as well as bones and muscles, and from the beginning of the recorded history of human words we can watch the ever new surprise with which men have recognized the war within their own souls, both between inconsistent instincts, and between instinct and the moral ideals which are the result of knowledge and reflection. "I delight," says Paul, "in the law of God after the inward man, but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members."

Here, too, as in the case of education, men have swung between attempts to ignore first one side and then the other side of the shield. Some have cherished the hope that, as the result of a final moral struggle, all impulses except the spiritual may in each man be destroyed, that "after the spirit we may make dead the deeds of the body." Others have denied the necessity of a struggle at all, and have claimed that if we follow our impulses with unflinching faith, we shall thereby create a method of life which will fit our instinctive nature as the mould fits the statue; where, in Blake's words:

God, like a Father rejoicing to see  
 His children as pleasant and happy as he,  
 Would have no more quarrels with the Devil or the barrel,  
 But kiss him and give him both drink and apparel.

Among a people accustomed to accept the teaching of Darwin, neither of these two views will be possible. It is true that many of our instincts point to a life other than that which we now live, the life of our pre-human or almost human ancestors. But we cannot get rid of our instincts any more than can any particular whale get rid of his rudimentary hind legs, and we can no more assume that those instincts will enable us with easy satisfaction to live that ancient life in connection with which they were developed

than can a whale assume that because he has rudimentary hind legs he can walk with comfort on dry land. Nor can we merely by moral striving alter permanently our racial type. Tennyson wrote before Darwin when he said :

Move upwards, working out the beast,  
And let the ape and tiger die.

Our racial type can be changed in its own time and according to its own laws, but to each of us, while we await that change, the saying acquires a new and rather sad meaning, that though in our moral conflicts we can seek the strong allies of deeper knowledge and nobler ideals, we cannot *by taking thought* add one cubit to our stature.

But Darwin has shaken the world of the social reformer even more completely than that of the moralist. For many centuries past the young men of each generation have been told by their elders that every proposed reform in social organization is "against human nature." They have generally, and rightly, ignored this warning, because no one knew what human nature was, and there were no means of distinguishing between those things in human character which the reformer could hope to change and those which he must assume to be unchangeable. Facts about human nature as apparently permanent as the belief in magic or the sentiment of monarchy have proved capable of change, while apparently superficial traits, such as the sense of the ridiculous or the need of recreation, have proved to be unexpectedly stubborn. I remember reading a story, I think about Frederick Denison Maurice, who one day in the middle of the last century noticed that macadam had been substituted for paving in part of Oxford Street. The passengers in his omnibus, being relieved for a moment from the deafening noise, turned and spoke to each other. Some day, he said, all Oxford Street will be macadamized and the omnibus will become a delightful informal club. The London streets are now paved with wood, and sitting as we do on the top of the omnibus, we could hear each other if we spoke in whispers. But no Londoner ever does talk to a casual neigh-

bour on an omnibus. Certain facts in our inherited nature make us shrink from the effort involved in acquiring every few minutes a new acquaintance. Indeed, as the conditions of city life bring us nearer and nearer together, in the railway carriage, in the lift, the theatre, the restaurant, in the great clubs where for years together we sit in the same rooms and eat and read among our unknown fellow-members, we fence ourselves about with the same invisible rule of silence, to be broken down only between the friends who slowly and cautiously come together. Fifty years ago if the proposal had been made to set up common dining-rooms for seven thousand members of one club, men of conservative minds would have rejected it as being somehow against human nature, and reformers would have welcomed it as abolishing our unnecessary and unnatural habit of reserve. Now we can understand the paradox that man when he makes cities which are as crowded as beehives must bring into them the need for comparative solitude which was developed among his ape-like ancestors.

It is by experiment that we learn what are the permanent facts of human nature which are relevant to any particular instance of a common life, but it is the Darwinian view of human nature which will enable us to systematize and explain our experiments.

Darwinism gives us a starting-point from which we can study such facts as that it is apparently useless to try to make a right-handed boy ambidextrous and quite easy to make the descendant of two generations of meat-eaters a healthy vegetarian, or that the threat of the workhouse seems to discourage a labourer from saving, and the prospect of an old age pension to encourage him. Above all it offers to the social reformer some guidance in his life-long search for those social motives which are the fulcrum of social change. Unless he is prepared to study undismayed the nature of man as evolution has for the moment left it, the reformer who is also a politician will find his life one of constant and cruel disillusion. Even if, like Disraeli, he is against Darwin and on the side of the angels, he may learn, against his will, that

his efforts to check the brutalities of Chinese indentured labour are only successful when they are backed by the instinctive hatred of the West European man for the Mongolian racial type. He may recognize in the shouting crowd who applaud his election the same instinct which shocked him at a great football match. He may realize with disgust, but without understanding, the professional skill by which his agent and the agent on the other side work up the driving force of a great political contest, by playing on those facts in human nature which he most desires to forget.

As one reflects on all this, one understands why so many of Darwin's contemporaries shrank from the intrusion of an impartial and sceptical science into things so sacred as the struggle for holiness in men's hearts or their longing for perfection in State and Church. Aristophanes felt the same horror at the calculation by science of the movements of the sun which he worshipped, and the human body which he loved. Darwinism must still seem to many good men to lead in the region of personal conduct to a cold-blooded compromise between impulse and caution, and in politics to the deliberate exploitation of human weakness. But the mean, says Aristotle, is an extreme. Knowledge of the conditions of our contest points not to contented acquiescence, but to a more untiring because a more successful effort. The genius of the musician is strengthened, not weakened, by all that he learns or divines of the formation of sound, and of the strange working of the ear and brain of man. It is when reason has brought most clearly into her view the unreasoning impulses, the weaknesses and the limitations of human nature, that the Kingdom of Reason of which Plato dreamed becomes most nearly possible. But the way to that kingdom lies through the service and interpretation of nature. It is placed,

Not in Utopia—subterranean fields—  
 Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where,  
 But in the very world, which is the world  
 Of all of us—the place where, in the end,  
 We find our happiness, or not at all.

## COMMENT ON DR. JACKS'S ARTICLE "THE PEACEFULNESS OF BEING AT WAR" (1915)\*

DR. JACKS'S ARTICLE is a vivid description of a state of mind which certainly exists in England, though I myself doubt whether it is so general or so continuous as he indicates. The Parliamentary Recruiting Committee have put the same point more tersely, in their poster of a soldier's smiling face with the inscription, "He's happy and satisfied; are you?" Most, perhaps, of those English men and women who are fighting, or nursing, or making munitions, or who, though they are doing none of these things, have concentrated their whole will and consciousness on the single purpose of a national victory, have for most of their time attained "rest for their souls." The young officer whom Dr. Jacks quotes is typical, in that, like the soldier on the poster, he says he is satisfied, using the word in exactly the same sense as Aristotle when he says that pleasure consists in the "satisfaction" or "filling up" of a physiological need. But in the present case the mere satisfaction of the physiological need for active and directed exertion is often accompanied, as Dr. Jacks points out, by a unified and harmonious satisfaction of certain intellectual and moral needs. Twelve months of war have, as he says, brought to a large number of English people a "peace of mind such as they have not possessed for generations"; though if he could visit every house in a working-class street, and penetrate to the inarticulate feelings of each of its inhabitants, he might find that that number was not sufficiently large to be called "England."

\* The article by Dr. L. P. Jacks to which this Comment was a reply is reprinted in full, by kind permission of the author, at the end of this essay. Both articles were originally published together in the American *New Republic*, September 11, 1915 (Ed.)

Dr. Jacks ends his article with the words, "No doubt the same thing *has happened elsewhere*." Now I have lately talked with several Americans who have been travelling in Germany, have read a certain number of German papers, and have seen a few letters from a German political friend which escaped the censor. From that scanty evidence I gather that the state of mind which Dr. Jacks describes is rather more general and more continuous in Germany than in England. Among the French and Belgian non-combatants whom I know it seems to be a good deal less general.

But this condition of "peacefulness," whether one accepts Dr. Jacks's estimate of its prevalence or my own, exists, and its existence raises two interesting questions. Is that condition so supreme a human good that it makes war the best form of international relationship? Or, even if war is an evil, ought each of us to strive during war to attain that condition? The first question is, I think, easily answered. A state of consciousness must be judged not only by its momentary quality, but by its continuance, and the "peacefulness of being at war" is doomed by the nature of things to be transitory. If the world-war were to last in its present intensity for a whole generation, it would become a conflict of famished women and children fighting each other with their teeth and nails. It seems therefore reasonably certain that, if only for the lack of men and materials, this war must in a comparatively few years come to some sort of an end. The nations will then find that a large proportion of their best and bravest men are dead, while the degenerate or diseased are alive; that the slow development of the material conditions of a good life for the working classes has been checked; and that West European democracy is endangered, because military discipline in the presence of a group of exasperated enemies has become the supreme national need. Under such conditions it is impossible to hope that after the war our present degree of peace of mind, our harmony of purpose, our "spirit of fellowship, with its attendant cheerfulness," will continue. We shall return to the "moral chaos," which Dr. Jacks describes as existing in England

before the war. Our "idealisms" will again be "at war with each other" and we shall often be "inwardly divided against ourselves." We shall have, in fact, to begin again the "mental fight" of which Blake spoke, and to undertake again the weary and controversial task of building up a civilization in which some measure of harmonious satisfaction for the human spirit can be found in time of peace.

The question whether combatants and non-combatants ought, during the existence of war, to surrender themselves to that peace of mind which Dr. Jacks describes is much more difficult. To the soldier in the trenches it is not only an anodyne which few will grudge him, but probably an important source of military efficiency. Non-combatants, however, like Dr. Jacks and myself, who are in the habit of observing our own states of mind, and can therefore to some extent control them, have to come to a deliberate choice. If I, too, am to make a personal confession, I may say that I believe that the war was mainly the result of German and Austrian aggression, that I intensely desire victory for the Allies, and that a decisive victory for the German governing caste in their present temper would be, in my view, a disaster to all that I most value in civilization. I also recognize that an absolute surrender of consciousness to the single purpose of victory even by non-combatants has a certain military value. But although my choice means that I sleep not better but worse in time of war than in time of peace, I cannot myself make, or desire to make, that surrender, because to do so would be to abandon as far as I am concerned any attempt to control by reasoned thought the policy of my nation. I should choose the unrest of thought because I desire that the war should come to an end the instant its continuance ceases to be the less of two monstrous evils, and because I believe that our national policy should even during the fighting be guided not only by the will to conquer but also by the will to make possible a lasting peace.

For the young men who fight, it may be best to abandon the effort of thought, though that fact constitutes not the least of the evils of war; but those who are too old to fight

owe to their nation the duty of calculating all the consequences of national policy, however painful and uncertain the process of calculation may be. It is that which Bismarck meant when he insisted on the supreme importance of controlling, even during a war, military action by political thought. Now that whole nations with their parliaments, and churches, and universities, and industries, are "mobilized," and the intellectual life of Europe is put under military censorship, such a control is less easy than in 1870 but not less vitally important, and it can only be attained if politicians prefer the struggle for truth to the peacefulness of self-surrender.

As things are, an article in an American journal is the shortest and easiest way by which an Englishman can communicate with his German friends. I know that there are men in Germany who are in like case with myself. They are in a minority, but as the war goes on, and even more when the war shows signs of coming to an end, their number will increase. Should any one of them read this, I send him greeting, and assure him of my conviction that if ever that imperfect community of nations is to be reconstituted, of which England and Germany once formed part, there will be work for those who during the war have denied themselves the luxury of mental peace.

*The Text of Dr. Jacks's article is as follows:*

During the last twelve months the life of Great Britain has been acquiring a unitary aim or purpose. The aim itself is warlike; but it has been attended with some increase of mental peace. When war broke out we were living, as a nation, without any end or aim. We had our philosophers, of course, who instructed us that the "end" of the state was this or that; but very few persons consciously adopted the philosopher's end as their own; and those high-minded souls who did so must have felt themselves somewhat lonely—must, at all events, have lacked the calmness and strength which come from realizing that our neighbours are sharing our devotion to the common ideal. Whatever ideals

existed had but a piecemeal acceptance: they waxed and waned, here to-day and gone to-morrow; they were at war with one another, and their devotees were mostly unconscious of any deeper principle on which they could unite. And beyond the relatively narrow circle where these ideals maintained their precarious dominion lay the vast dim populations, held together by "group instincts," by geographical conditions, and by the necessities of the economic struggle for existence. Regarded from the moral point of view, the scene was one of indescribable confusion: it was, in fact, a moral chaos.

Our "inner state," in consequence, was marked by profound unrest. I doubt if there ever was a time when in general the minds of Englishmen were so agitated as they were in the few years preceding the war. Rest for our souls was hardly to be found anywhere. In religion, in philosophy, in politics, we were all at sixes and sevens, fighting one another in the name of our ideals, or striving to rouse the lethargic masses who cared not a button for any of our idealism; and often, it must be confessed, we were in a state of chronic irritation; and to make matters worse, a school of writers had arisen, represented by Mr. Bernard Shaw, who made it their business to irritate and, incidentally, to confuse us still further.

I believe that twelve months of war have brought to England a peace of mind such as she has not possessed for generations. This statement, I should like to say, is not an experiment in paradox, but a sober statement of a psychological fact. It is, to some extent, a personal confession; but one which I should not dare to make were there not abundant evidence of its being a common state of mind. In spite of all we have suffered and have still to suffer: the loss of our friends and kinsmen; the awful anxieties for those at the front; the knowledge of the immense miseries of the nations at war; the grave uncertainties of the future—in spite of this, and all else in the catalogue of evils, I am convinced that the mind of England is much calmer than it was twelve months ago. To judge by my own observation, I would say further

that the calmest people are precisely those who have suffered, or stand to suffer, most; or else they are the people, of whom the soldiers at the front are the chief, who are making the greatest exertions and facing the greatest sacrifices in the common cause. That element of "poise" in life, which Matthew Arnold valued so highly, has become an actual possession of millions in whom twelve months ago it was utterly lacking. One feels its presence—or perhaps only the beginning of its presence—in the social atmosphere, and in the faces and voices of men and women. It is pre-eminently the soldiers' contribution to the new and better *ethos* of our time. "This life just *satisfies* me," wrote a young officer from the front. "Up to the time I came out here I never quite felt that I was doing my proper job. But I feel it now."

The feeling expressed in this officer's letter is spreading and deepening all over the country. It seems a strange phenomenon, one we could hardly have predicted in advance of its actual appearance, and to those who hear of it from afar perhaps incredible. And yet it is nothing more or less than the peace of mind which comes to every man who, after tossing about among uncertainties and trying his hand at this and that, finds at last a mission, a cause to which he can devote himself body and soul. At last he has something to live for; and though the living may be hard and costly he makes no complaint; all that is well repaid by the harmony which comes from the unitary aim of his life. It is so with nations. Take, for example, the colossal expenditure of the nation's wealth. That we are spending well over a thousand millions per annum in financing the war is enough to appal anybody. But it does not appal us, for we know and approve the object of the expenditure, which is the defence of the liberties of our race. Is there anything better on which national wealth could be spent? Surely there is more ground for anxiety in the thought which forces itself upon us in time of peace that all this wealth we are accumulating in ever greater quantities has an unknown destination; that a thousand dangerous uses await it in the prevailing moral chaos. Better that the nation grow poor for a cause we can honour,

than grow rich for an end that is unknown. Who can regard without deep misgiving the process of accumulating wealth unaccompanied by a corresponding growth of knowledge as to the uses to which wealth must be applied? This is what we see in normal times, and the spectacle is profoundly disturbing. Far less disturbing at all events is that process of spending the wealth which we have now to witness. Certainly it does not alarm us to the extent one would have thought probable before the event. England spending her money, and knowing for what she spends it, has more peace of mind than England making her money, but in grave doubt and uncertainty as to the social and individual uses to which it will be put. I believe that England, at a time when she is spending three millions a day on the war, is not nearly so anxious about her wealth as she is in times of peace.

It is a literal fact that millions of men and women who twelve months ago were "at a loose end" and living aimless lives have now discovered that they have a mission. The effect of this discovery is greatest, of course, upon the individuals who have made it; cases are known to the present writer which might be described as veritable conversions. But the whole temper of society is affected by the presence in its midst of so many people to whom a vocation has come at last and the change is in the direction of mental steadiness and equilibrium. To that extent it may be claimed that we are happier than we were. It would be a serious mistake in any event to suppose we are all sadder than we were before the war. I have seen several articles by American writers describing London as "gloomy," "overshadowed," "depressed." This I confess appears to me mere superficial observation. No doubt the streets are less brilliant, the hotels less crowded, the noise less obtrusive. But the individual is not more gloomy. He is brighter, more cheerful. He worries less about himself. He is a trifle more unselfish and correspondingly more agreeable as a companion or a neighbour. There is more repose in social intercourse than there was: indeed I venture to think that an American visitor might find that our manners were somewhat improved. The tone and substance of conver-

sation are better. The type of person who is bored with himself and with the world is less frequently met with. People are glad to see one another, and eager to hear each other's thoughts. There is more health in our souls, and perhaps more in our bodies. "For years I was the victim of insomnia. But since the war I have slept remarkably well." This remark was made the other day by a person wholly unaware of its significance.

This feeling of being banded together, which comes over a great population in its hour of trial, is a wonderful thing. It produces a kind of exhilaration which goes far to offset the severity of the trial. The spirit of fellowship, with its attendant cheerfulness, is in the air. It is comparatively easy to love one's neighbour when we realize that he and we are common servants and common sufferers in the same cause. A deep breath of that spirit has passed into the life of England. No doubt the same thing has happened elsewhere.

## SOCIALISM AND THE FABIAN SOCIETY (1916):

A SEMI-OFFICIAL HISTORY of the Fabian Society (1884-1915) has just been written by my friend Edward R. Pease, who was its secretary for twenty-five years of its thirty-two years of life. I myself left the society in 1904, but I was one of the four members (Shaw, Webb, Olivier, and myself) who had most to do with building it up, and I have kept in touch with it since my resignation.†

The chief significance of the society in the general development of social thought has been that it used the name and prestige of socialism for a movement which was free from and often opposed to Marx's analysis of history, industry, and human motive, and which therefore influenced non-socialist political opinion in England, and helped to inspire the Revisionist movement in German social-democracy.

Shaw joined the infant society in September 1884, Webb and Olivier in May 1885, and I in April 1886. But from the beginning of 1885 we had all four belonged to a little reading circle in Hampstead for the study of *Das Kapital*. We expected to agree with Marx, but found ourselves from the beginning criticizing him. Webb and Olivier were civil servants who four or five years before had scored highly in political economy at the "Class One" examination owing to their

\* First published in the American *New Republic*, July 24, 1916, as a review of Edward R. Pease's *History of the Fabian Society* (1916). (Ed.)

† Graham Wallas became a member of the Executive of the Society in 1888, and contributed the essay on *Property under Socialism* to the *Fabian Essays* in 1889. He resigned from the Executive in 1895. The underlying reasons which gradually led up to his resignation from the Society are given in this essay. The late Professor Halévy in his *Histoire du Peuple Anglais* (Epilogue, Vol. I, Book 3, Chap. 2), writes of his action: "There was no quarrel; he remained the friend and the admirer of those with whom he had collaborated throughout his youth." (Ed.)

ability to expound and apply the Ricardian law of rent. It was on this point that we first definitely disagreed with Marx. Instead of taking surplus value in the lump, we divided it into the three "rents" of land, capital, and ability, and faced the fact that, if he worked with the worst land, tools, and brains, "in cultivation," the worst-paid labourer might be producing no more wealth than he consumed. This led us to abandon "abstract labour" as the basis of value, and to adopt Jevons's conception of value as fixed by the point where "marginal effort" coincided with "marginal utility."

It was this rejection of Marxism which made possible our partial "permeation" of Liberal and other non-socialist political organizations. Instead of looking on "capitalism" and "exploitation" as a single fact to be destroyed by the shock-tactics of class-war and forcible revolution, we came to see the economic advantages which individual men enjoyed by inheriting or acquiring land or bonds or brains or training as matters of more and less. If a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer taxed land or unearned income, or an educationist worked to improve the primary or technical schools, or a hygienist invented schemes of housing, we accepted his work, not as a "palliative," but as an actual step towards our ideal.

Socialism is a movement towards economic equality to be achieved by democracy, and we carried the same habit of mind into our political as into our economic work. Every extension of the franchise or improvement in administrative machinery represented to us a percentage of our programme. When Webb and Shaw and I were elected in the late 'eighties and early 'nineties on to London municipal bodies, and Olivier became Colonial Secretary in Jamaica, our colleagues found us as keen as any "common-sense" Liberal or Conservative to bring about the smallest advance in administrative efficiency.

After we had finished *Das Kapital*, we continued the Hampstead circle for three more years, and, both there and in the preparation of Fabian and other lectures, worked at the history of social thought. Our interest in history, and

the constant stimulus of Shaw's insight and genius, made us from the first reject the Marxist "economic interpretation of history"—the narrow and mechanical reference of all human actions to economic motives. We never supposed that all political alliances and party quarrels, or all wars or sexual customs or religions were due to the single desire to make money.

Finally, we never believed in an inevitable, automatic, and "scientific" process by which a social revolution would come of itself. That theory is apt to present itself to the young reformer as a reason why he should trust to his own automatic impulses, should read and think when he feels inclined to, should speak with such eloquence as comes from the exaltation of the moment, and should attend committees as long as they interest him. During ten years of constant intimacy we learnt (imperfectly enough in my own case) from Shaw's exacting passion for artistic perfection and Webb's almost incredible force and industry, that one could only get things done in politics by a steady and severe effort of will\*.

And yet, in spite of the Fabian tradition of elasticity, and ingenuity, and efficiency, I always, after the first few years, felt rather restless in the Society, and in the end left it. And now that I read this history, with its calmly accurate record of names and dates and tracts and manifestos, I find myself wondering whether events will prove that there was a sufficient reason for my dissatisfaction.

I can explain my own difficulties best by quoting a few

\* In another manuscript version of this article, Graham Wallas writes. "The traditional Fabian attitude of mind and will was, of course, made by Webb and Shaw. Webb taught us to work, and to forget that at Oxford and Cambridge one reserved the afternoon for rest. I remember that Podmore complained that the strenuous life we were leading in 1887 left no time for 'exercise and amusement' and that Webb told him that he should find exercise in walking to lectures and amusement in delivering them. It was a turning point in my own career when I explained to the Executive that I had been unavoidably prevented from carrying out a promise to draft something, and Webb said, 'No doubt you had every excuse, but you will observe that the thing has not been done . . .'" (Ed.)

facts from Pease's book. Tract 70 in 1896 (p. 251), for instance, declared that the Fabian Society "has no distinctive opinions on the Marriage Question, Religion, Art . . . or any other subject than its own special business of practical Democracy and Socialism." In 1899 the Executive argued that the question at issue between the Boers and the British Government was one "which Socialism cannot solve and does not touch" (p. 129). I do not think that the Society has ever published a word on its own responsibility about India. In the present war the Society "has made no pronouncement and adopted no policy" (p. 234). In my case other things than our own "special business" were always breaking in, and disturbing the "practical" problems of democracy and equality. I could not decide on a policy as to educational administration without bringing in my views as to the effect of ecclesiastical control, or on free trade without considering its influence on international relations, or on such a manifesto against a Liberal Government as *To your Tents, O Israel* (1893), without considering the probable influence of a Conservative Government on a number of matters which lay outside our "special business."

My old difficulties indicate, I believe, a problem which is vital to the whole future of the socialist movement. It may be argued that a propagandist body which does not take up some one question and stick to it must be futile. But socialism has in fact never presented itself as a "single-question" movement, adherence to which is only an incident in the political life of those who call themselves socialists. Like the "principles" of the French Revolution, or Mazzini's republicanism, or Bentham's utilitarianism, socialism has claimed to be a *Weltanschauung*, a "world-view" by the guidance of which all political and economic problems could be solved. And everywhere socialists have taken on themselves the responsibility of forming political parties which have to deal, if only by advice and criticism, with all the many-sided activities of a modern state.

One wonders, therefore, now that this war has shifted the centre of gravity in problems of human organization, whether

when peace comes, socialism will still seem to the kind of people who now call themselves socialists to be a sufficing *Weltanschauung*? Or will the struggle for economic and political equality inside each nation come to be looked on by working-class leaders and by the middle-class men and women who sympathize with them as a part only, however important it may be, of some larger conception of life? The war has now lasted two years, and socialism has had no more influence than Christianity on either its origin or its course. This war will leave the condition of international relations as dangerous as a mined trench, and we shall all be forced to treat the prevention of a new explosion as the main purpose of our political lives. Will the history, the associations, the practical programme, of socialism be a sufficient guide for that purpose?

The wind in this respect bloweth where it listeth. Some great leader may turn international socialism into a world-purpose in whose light the death and maiming of a whole generation of young men in war may be seen as resulting from the same failure of imagination and sympathy as that which produces Chicago slums and Mexican peonage, and the brutalities of Zabern and of Russian Jewry. Or, as I myself think it to be more probable, the word socialism may go the way of "natural rights" and the "greatest happiness principle," and in our new need we may find a new name for our hopes.

## THE PRICE OF INTOLERANCE (1920)\*

I AM AN ENGLISHMAN who has visited America at intervals during the last twenty-two years. I have a very real affection for America, and an interest in her social and political development, which has become more intense now that the war has left her the undisputed financial and

\* First published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1920, after Graham Wallas's third visit to the United States, as Dodge lecturer at Yale, in 1919.

The general situation in the United States which called forth this article was largely governed by the policy of the United States Department of Justice in Washington immediately after the War. President Wilson had appointed as Attorney-General a Pennsylvanian Quaker, A. Mitchell Palmer, who entered upon a vigorous campaign against "alien Reds," particularly Russians. He announced that his Department had the names and records of sixty thousand radical suspects who were assumed to be liable for deportation. Raids were carried out in many cities, premises searched and wrecked, and thousands of arrests made. The great majority of the suspects had to be unconditionally released, often after barbarous treatment. The most spectacular incident of this campaign was the deportation of two hundred and forty-nine aliens from New York in December, 1919, in a vessel which sailed under sealed orders, but whose destination was known to be a port of Soviet Russia. The two most celebrated American anarchists, Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, were in this company, so that the incident gained world publicity. The fear of Red revolution was spread throughout the country stimulated by agents of the Department of Justice acting under the espionage laws. In many States professors, teachers and ministers found themselves in danger, and the right of public meetings was continually challenged by irregular bodies of the "vigilantes" kind.

A group of leading lawyers, three of them being professors of the Harvard Law School, made a critical inquiry into the "illegal practices of the United States Department of Justice." Their report started a movement of protest which led to a thorough and widespread revulsion of opinion, and produced within a few months valuable results in official policy. (ED.)

industrial leader of the world. But in November, 1919, after some months' stay, I find myself surprised and troubled by a fact as to the existence of which all my American friends agree, and which may, I believe, indicate a serious danger both for America and for the world.

On earlier visits I had noticed that, in spite of a widespread habit of personal good nature, majorities in America are apt to deal rather summarily with minorities. But this time it seems that the whole tradition of political toleration has been broken: that freedom of speech and writing and meeting has become an open question; and that many important newspapers and politicians, supported by a large body of public opinion, approach that question with a presumption against freedom.

The Chicago *Evening Post* said the other day, "Just now, in popular parlance, a Bolshevik is anybody, from a dynamiter to a man who wears a straw hat in September. In more enlightened circles, Bolshevism includes paternalism, socialism, syndicalism, and anarchism, or any other questionable 'ism'." The words "radical" and "red" are being used in an equally loose and general way.

I am told that, at the New York picture-theatres, no portrait is more heartily applauded than that of Judge Gary.\* At a recent meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute, Judge Gary referred to "Bolshevism" as "a disease," and said, "There is only one way to treat this disease, and that is, to stamp it out." Judge Gary went on to explain that he relied on "reasonable laws wisely administered," and that it is only the "slinking, desperate, murderous Bolsheviks" whom the Secret Service Department should detect and expose, and the iron hand of justice should punish as they deserve." But the picture audiences seem to applaud him as the man who is determined to stamp out Bolshevism in the larger sense of the Chicago *Evening Post*.

This temper is especially dangerous when, as at present, men are disputing about new problems which cannot be

\* Elbert Henry Gary, formerly a judge at that time Chairman and chief Executive Officer of the United States Steel Corporation. (Ed.)

solved by any existing political or economic expedient, and which require the patient invention of new expedients. In America, as throughout the whole world, the extended use of mechanical energy has transformed human relationships. National isolation has been abolished, and we are only beginning to invent means of international co-operation. Within each nation the size of the industrial unit constantly increases, and the chance of a workman setting up a business of his own constantly becomes less. The idea of breaking up the larger industrial units, as advocated in 1913 by Mr. Wilson's *New Freedom*, has been silently dropped, and no new idea for dealing with the situation can claim any general acceptance.

Therefore, behind the mutual suspicion of employers and workmen, lies an unsolved and extraordinarily complex problem. Very few Americans, except Judge Gary, seem quite wholehearted in defending the existing system, or state control, or trade union control, or any definite combination of, or substitute for, the three principles. Everyone acknowledges that we require efficiency in production, a fair distribution of the product, and a reasonable degree of self-determination in the producer; but no one knows how we are to obtain what we require. This admitted ignorance of the right path in industrial organization is accompanied by certain profound intellectual changes, which have undermined the authority of religion and custom. And the rapidly increasing concentration of European and American populations in noisy streets and noisier factories has made popular political discussion, except among tired men meeting after working hours in expensive halls, almost impossible.

• When one realizes this, the stale old arguments for free speech and free thought seem to acquire a new and urgent significance.

What men need now, all over the world, and especially in America, is not only permission for free discussion, but a recognition that the positive encouragement of free discussion and the provision of practical opportunities for it are vital necessities. The biggest and most strident newspaper is

no adequate substitute for free discussion. One cannot argue with a newspaper, and the increasing size and complexity of the industrial unit has transformed, by division of labour between the proprietor and the staff, the whole conditions of journalism. No one now believes that a newspaper article always represents the serious and independent thought of the writer. A distant "boss" may have telephoned a curt order to the editor, which the editor passed on to the writer. In the leading articles, and even the news columns, of some of the great New York or London daily papers, any man who is himself a professional writer constantly feels this. In paragraph after paragraph the professional eye misses those signs of exploring thought and considered statement which mark the effort of veracity. The writer, one feels, has merely been told to "boost" one cause or person, or to "knock" another.

If I had space, I might deal with the effect which this difficulty in securing serious and fruitful discussion is likely to produce upon party politics, upon law and order, and upon the workman's or employer's sense that he is being fairly treated by the community. But here I propose to deal only with its probable effect on the work of the professed political and social thinker.

Dr. Lawrence Lowell, in his report as President of Harvard College for 1916-1917, said, "Experience has proved, and probably no one would now deny, that knowledge can advance, or at least can advance most rapidly, only by means of an unfettered search for truth on the part of those who devote their lives to seeking it in their respective fields, and by complete freedom in imparting to their pupils the truth that they have found."

Those who devote their lives to seeking truth in the field of politics and sociology require food and lodging, and help and encouragement, if they are to do their work. When Socrates was asked, after his conviction, to suggest his own punishment, he suggested the daily provision of a plain dinner for himself in the Athenian town hall. The jury thought him either insane or guilty of an insolent paradox. We can see that he was making a moderate and sensible proposal. The

need for the intellectual "midwifery" of Socrates is greater now than it was in the fifth century before Christ at Athens. But if Socrates, or Aristotle, or Locke, or Bentham, should be living now, say, at the age of twenty-three, in a great American city, conscious of the power and the will to undertake on behalf of mankind the "intolerable disease" of political thought, how would he be received?

We recognize, as the contemporaries of Socrates did not, our dependence for material wealth on the natural sciences, and men now feel respect, and even gratitude, for any sign of pre-eminent genius and devotion in those sciences. When William Thomson (afterwards Lord Kelvin) won the Smith's prize for mathematics in Cambridge University, one of his examiners said to another, "The fact is that you and I are just about fit to black young Thomson's boots." But political science, because it deals with human beings, inevitably arouses human passions. A young political genius would, by the necessity of his being, extend his thinking to include every man, woman and child whom any proposed political or social arrangement affects; and that fact would make him, as Wedderburn in 1776 said of the young Bentham, "dangerous" in the eyes of those who think in terms of a class or a profession. Even if so conservative a thinker as Alexander Hamilton was in 1780 were now alive in America, he would certainly be delated by someone as a "Bolshevik."

In 1915 I reviewed for the *Harvard Quarterly Journal of Economics* an extraordinarily interesting and penetrating book on "Imperial Germany," by Professor Thorstein Veblen, then of the University of Missouri. His analysis of the causes of German aggression was so effective, that the United States Bureau of Public Information suggested, in 1918, its use as anti-German propaganda. The director of the Bureau did not then know that, some months before, the Postmaster-General had forbidden the transmission of the book by post. It is still, as I write, barred, and the publisher, who has repeatedly asked for the reason, has received no answer. The whole story seems to show, if history had not already shown it in every country and every century, that those officers of

the Secret Service Department on whom Judge Gary depends for "stamping out Bolshevism" are apt to be almost incredibly stupid when they deal with the censorship of serious and sincere thought.

If, therefore, the American community had now to deal with a young Bentham, whose promise of pre-eminence in the human sciences was as great as was William Thomson's in the natural sciences, it is pretty certain that he would be suspected and abused. If he had something less than Bentham's dogged courage, and did not, like Bentham, inherit a competence from his father, he would probably be silenced. Lesser men might either choose more profitable occupations than that of political thinker, or might think and write on timid and conventional lines. As a fact, in spite of numerous and important exceptions, the great mass of American writing on social and political subjects has seemed to many outside critics timid and conventional. And some American leaders in industry and finance and politics—men who would never dream of employing a timid and conventional chemist, or engineer, or surgeon—are, I honestly believe, content that it should be so.

## THE BRITISH CIVIL SERVICE (1928)\*

DURING THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS, in all the civilized communities of the world, the functions of Government have changed from being mainly negative into being mainly positive, that is to say, Governments have come to be engaged not merely in preventing wrong things from being done, but in bringing it about that right things shall be done.

The cause of this change is in the main the growing complexity of human society resulting from scientific discovery. It is because the village carrier has turned into a vast railway system, the miller's wheel into a vast system of electric power, the village money-lender or the private bank of the market town into a vast system of international credit, that Governments have found themselves compelled to become positive. Even Sir Ernest Benn, than whom I suppose there exists no more wholehearted opponent of the idea of Government control, began an attack upon the expansion of Government by saying, "We have accepted as a nation the view that it is the duty of the State to do things."

Now the main difference between a State which has to do things and a State which has to prevent things being done, arises from the fact that the prevention of wrongdoing can be carried out by one man with disciplined human instruments merely carrying out his orders. A negative Government only requires courage and consistency in its officials; but a positive Government requires a constant supply of invention and suggestion, and invention and suggestion take time. One man cannot in a given time do all the invention that is required in that time, any more than one bee can in a year

\* Inaugural address to the Institute of Public Administration for the Session 1927-28. Published in *Public Administration* for January, 1928, under the title "Government." (Ed.)

secrete all the wax which is necessary for the building up of a year's honeycomb.

In England the eighteenth-century Government may be taken as the pattern, in some ways a successful pattern, of what I have called a negative Government. It engaged with great vigour in national defence both on land and sea, and in the raising by taxation of the funds necessary for national defence. The rest—trade, industry, health, education—it left either to private persons, or to local corporations which had no definite connection with the central State. The historical turning-point where the State began to find that it must undertake the business of invention and suggestion, came with the Reform Bill of 1832, and with the social legislation, as we now call it, which followed that Reform Bill. The Factory Act of 1833, the new Poor Law of 1834, the new Municipal Act of 1835, the registration system of 1836, the Education Department of 1839, and the making of a reformed Post Office in 1841, required a process of intellectual invention and intellectual initiative. Where did that intellectual invention and initiative come from? The Civil Service, at the time of the Reform Bill of 1832, could not invent, because it was the creature of mere patronage. Every appointment to the regular Civil Service was initiated by Members of Parliament according to a system by which each Member of Parliament voting with the Government had a certain section of the public patronage handed over to him, and the more inefficient his nominee, the more grateful were the relations of his nominee. We all know some of the facts, and I only give one single instance. Mr. Edward Romilly, giving evidence about 1835, says, "There was a case in our office (the Board of Audit) of a gentleman being appointed who could neither read nor write. He was almost an idiot, and there was the greatest possible difficulty in getting him out of the office." Such a man was not likely to invent new and ingenious methods of carrying on the audit of the national accounts. And even when, by some accident or other, you got an able man into the ordinary Service, as happened, for instance, from time to time in the Treasury,

that man had to spend the first ten or fifteen years of his official life in the merest routine, directing and wafering envelopes, addressing letters, and copying, before he was called upon to use his brains in any way. There were certain offices, of which the Colonial Office is a striking example, where it would have meant national disaster if some thinking had not been done; and in those offices and in other offices when a crisis came, it was the custom to bring in from outside mature men, very often successful lawyers, in order to help the Minister to think. You had in the Colonial Office a splendid succession of men like Sir James Stephen and Sir Henry Taylor, who were brought in in mature life to be part of the thinking apparatus of the office; and when we reorganized the Post Office we brought in Sir Rowland Hill, whom the aristocratic Secretary to the Post Office used always to call "the man from Birmingham."

As Sir Charles Trevelyan pointed out afterwards, this system had a double fault: "The ordinary Civil Servants are superseded because they are incompetent, and they remain incompetent because they are superseded."

But these special advisers were few, and were confined to a few offices. Who did the rest of the work of intellectual initiative? To an extent which it is difficult to realize now, that work was done personally by His Majesty's Ministers. Those of you who have read Queen Victoria's letters will remember that on one occasion the Queen, when she had been on the Throne two or three months, asked Lord John Russell what was the meaning of the word "bureaucracy," and Lord John Russell wrote to Lord Palmerston asking him to explain it very simply and very clearly to the Queen. Lord Palmerston wrote in reply, and practically said that "bureaucracy" meant allowing your Civil Servants to think, instead of doing all the work for yourself. He says—and I can imagine a modern Foreign Minister reading it with something of a sigh of regret for the old times—that abroad, particularly in Germany and in France, there is a class of persons in the Public Offices who are not Ministers and who "exercise much more power and influence than the corre-

sponding class of persons do in this country. The Minister for Foreign Affairs in France, Austria, Prussia, and Russia seldom takes the trouble of writing his own despatches, except perhaps upon some very particular or important occasion." Lord Palmerston, who was a magnificent administrative athlete, did in fact write most of his despatches, many of which were not of particular importance or value, and Minister after Minister did succeed in running his office somehow under those conditions. Peel was a man of fine natural constitution, though of sedentary habits; Gladstone was a born athlete—and Peel, Gladstone, Palmerston, ran their offices under the idea that nearly all the thinking and suggestion and initiative in the office were to come from the Minister.

In the period of administrative reconstruction from 1832 to 1870 one finds that, besides the Minister and the personal advisers like Sir James Stephen and Sir Henry Taylor, a good deal of administrative initiative came from private Members of Parliament. From Lord Shaftesbury, when he was Lord Ashley, came the principle of the new system of factory inspection. Joseph Hume, with the help of Francis Place, did most of the invention of the new legal position assigned in 1825 to the Trade Unions. A certain amount of invention was done by Parliamentary Committees, and by the newly discovered or newly applied system of Royal Commissions, like the Royal Commission that made the Poor Law of 1834, the Royal Commission that made the details of factory inspection in 1833, and the Municipal Reform Commission of 1835. These Royal Commissions found it necessary, if they were to do their work, to appoint Assistant Commissioners or sub-Commissioners to go round the country and study the subject and report to them, and the Assistant Commissioners, because they had become experts in their subjects, were often chosen to administer the new schemes that they had helped to invent, and appeared later as inspectors or officials in the new Government offices.

But all that was insufficient, and as the years went on, and society became more complex, was constantly felt to be

insufficient. Sir Henry Taylor, than whom there has hardly ever been a more observant or thoughtful Civil Servant, writing in 1836, says, "It is one business to do what must be done, another to devise what ought to be done. It is the spirit of the British Government, as hitherto existing, to transact only the former business." Lord John Russell—who was not an athlete and a cutter-down of oak trees like Mr. Gladstone, or boyishly active at eighty-three like Lord Palmerston—writing in 1847, said that British Ministers could not then do their proper work of initiative. "The time of Ministers," he says, "is so taken up that very few of them can give their attention to any great subject."

The effect was that though there was a crying need for Government initiative arising from the great social and economic changes of that period, the necessary Government initiative was not supplied, and that it came to be taken for granted that Governments, in all matters requiring thought and initiative, must be inefficient. Lord Lansdowne, for instance, speaking in 1847, said, "It is invariably admitted that Governments are the worst of cultivators, the worst of manufacturers, the worst of traders." When the English railway system was being rapidly developed, we can now see what an enormous saving of future waste and friction and confusion would have resulted from an intelligent degree of Government direction in that process. But Sir Robert Peel said that he would not allow "the torpid hands of the State," the torpid hands of his own Government, to interfere in the development of the railway system.

If anyone had reflected that Government is a science like any other science, and had gone to Oxford, for instance, which believed itself to be a University given to the study of Government, and asked for advice, he would have been advised to read a few very interesting books by Aristotle or Hobbes, but would have found it very difficult to apply what he read in those books to the actual problems of how you should administer a Factory Act, how you should develop Poor Relief, or what you should do about the gold standard. Locke, Montesquieu, Hobbes, Aristotle and Plato, and the

other classics which were read at Oxford, did not make the necessary connection between high theory and the development of intellectual initiative in the art of government.

There was, however, one body of experience on which the British State at that time could fall back for suggestions. We had left the administration of British India to the East India Company, and although the connection of that Company with the Government was close, the servants of the East India Company had to do things, had to be positive and not merely negative. A young cadet who found himself in charge of a whole district had to invent from the beginning and not merely to act as a sort of policeman; and therefore the East India Company and the governmental Board of Control, having before them the constant possibility of the disappearance of their Empire in India, had been forced to choose with a certain amount of care their cadets, to train them at the East India Company's College at Haileybury, and to prepare them for the exercise of intellectual initiative in India.

Further, there was another reservoir of ideas and suggestions, the importance of which I think is becoming recognized, by students of British history—like my friend Professor Halévy, whose great History of Britain is now appearing—namely, Jeremy Bentham, who for the last twenty years of his life was constantly engaged in the process of administrative invention. He had, especially from 1820 to 1830 or 1831—he was working, in fact, on the subject at the time of his death in 1832—been writing day by day sections of a book which he called *The Outline of a Constitutional Code*, and which contained an immense scheme that seems to us now quite incredibly ingenious of central and local administration. He proposed that the Civil Service should be recruited by open competition, and that in order to secure that that open competition should not only be available to the one class of the community which then monopolized higher education, the parents of children whom they desired to compete should announce their intention some years beforehand and that the children, if they were considered suitable, should be given

State scholarships, and be prepared for the kind of special intellectual work which they would do in the various branches of the Civil Service. His proposals with regard to the recruitment of the Civil Servant had been published under the name of *Official Aptitude Maximised* in 1830. His admirable scheme for the relation between central and local government, his scheme for the reception in London of reliable information from the rest of the community, "and his "amelioration-suggestive" scheme for distributing suggestions from the centre to the localities, remained in manuscript, known by James Mill and used by him in directing the developments of government in India; known by John Stuart Mill, who had worked on the manuscripts as a boy; known by Sir Edwin Chadwick, who had been Bentham's secretary, and by Dr. Southwood Smith, who was the intellectual originator of our system of public health. *The Constitutional Code* was constantly used in suggesting details of legislation, but was not published until 1841, and then only imperfectly published. The whole of the original pile of manuscript is now in University College, London, waiting until some Civil Servant, who knows what administrative efficiency is, shall go and write a book based upon what he finds there.\*

So by the middle of the nineteenth century the growing complexity of social organization was calling for positive government; the negative government of the eighteenth century was breaking down, if only because of the actual breakdown in health of the Ministers who tried to direct it, and you had in the background a certain amount of positive Indian experience and Bentham's enormous mass of inventions. The actual occasion of a new departure, and the introduction of a British Civil Service based on the idea of positive creative government instead of merely police government, came from India. In 1840, Sir Charles Trevelyan, a brilliant young Indian Civil Servant, who had married Macaulay's sister, came home from India and, as

\* A detailed catalogue of the Bentham manuscripts in University College by Mr. A. T. Milne was issued in 1937. (Ed.)

was the custom of the day, was put as a mature official into the Treasury in order to advise the Government upon organization. No one ever worked so hard as Sir Charles Trevelyan (he appears in one of the novels of a less industrious Civil Servant, Anthony Trollope, under the name of Sir Gregory Hardlines). Sir Charles, from 1840 to 1848, found out all the facts of the Civil Service, and began to prepare in his mind for a drastic change. That change became politically possible in 1848, when executive Governments throughout continental Europe broke down one after another and were with difficulty recreated in 1849. Looking back upon that period in 1875, Sir Charles Trevelyan described his memory of what happened. He said, in his evidence before the Playfair Commission, "The revolutionary period of 1848 gave us a shake, and created a disposition to put our house in order, and one of the consequences was a remarkable series of investigations into Public Offices which lasted for five years and culminated in the Organization Report." That Report was issued by Sir Charles Trevelyan and Sir Stafford Northcote in the winter of 1853-54, and is the foundation of our existing Civil Service. It was based throughout upon the positive idea of government, upon the idea that government must be carried on by men who think about what ought to be done, instead of merely doing that which must be done. The idea frightened some of the ablest of the existing heads of departments. Sir James Stephen, of the Colonial Office, for instance, denied that original thinkers were wanted in the Civil Service. "Why invite," he said, "an athlete into a theatre where no combat and no reward await him?" Sir James Stephen's remarks were sent to John Stuart Mill at the East India Office, and Mill replied, "Mediocrity ought not to be engaged in managing the affairs of State" The Trevelyan Report, when first published, was, according to Macaulay, laughed at in the Clubs, and had little support in the House of Commons. It was, however, followed almost immediately by the Crimean War, which was marked by a complete breakdown of the administrative side of our Services. An agitation for administrative reform spread throughout the

country. In consequence, in 1855, the first Civil Service Commissioners were appointed, with the duty of carrying on an independent examination of the nominees of Members of Parliament. They had their difficulties : the idea was new that the nominees of Members of Parliament should be subject to criticism by a Commission, and on one occasion Lord Palmerston sent to Somerset House, where the Civil Service Commissioners used to sit, ordering them to come to him and bring the answers of a certain candidate and the papers which they had set, in order that they might be carpeted by the Prime Minister. The Civil Service Commissioners, I am proud to say, replied that unfortunately their regulations prevented them from doing anything of the kind, the papers could not go out of their possession, but if the Prime Minister would come to their office they would be only too happy to show them. Lord Palmerston saw the writing and arithmetic of his nominee and ceased to interfere. At first the independence of the Commission had to fight against many enemies, but the principle of competition was slowly introduced, at first by requiring that two or three candidates should appear before the Commissioners for each post, and gradually moving in the direction of more open competition. The three candidates for each post, when one of them was the nominee of an important statesman, sometimes, I am afraid, gave rise to evasions. There were two gentlemen who used to be known as the "Treasury Idiots," and if it was very necessary that the nominated candidate should get in, he was ordered to compete against these two gentlemen.

The system was made more efficient in 1859, when a Certificate from the Civil Service Commissioners was made a condition of superannuation. Things went quietly on until in 1867 we took a sudden "leap in the dark" and created a Parliament depending on mainly working-class votes. From that moment, those who had enjoyed patronage in the past felt that patronage was slipping from them, and were afraid of the new men, the little local Conservative or Liberal associations in the country into whose hands patronage might fall while the local politicians had not yet learnt to value

patronage. This change coincided with a more general change of mind in the eighteen-sixties. Men, in the first place, acquired a growing recognition of the complexity of the new industrial society, and, in the second place, began to fear the new type of administrative efficiency which had appeared in Prussia, and which had struck down in campaigns of a few weeks first Denmark and then Austria. At the same time the idea of "science" acquired a growing prestige, and the words "scientific government" were increasingly used for the kind of government which was needed by the new conditions. It was possible, therefore, in 1870, to issue the Order in Council which threw open the whole of the administrative Civil Service, the whole of what came to be called Class I, to open competition; and that scheme was further developed in 1875 by the Playfair Commission, which made a system of competitive examination for the new pensionable appointments to Class II.

Now, so far we had merely made a change in the method of recruitment. We recruited the Civil Service in a way that was intended to produce intellectual initiative, but we had not yet thought out how that intellectual initiative was to be organized inside the Offices, and it is extraordinarily interesting to notice in the evidence before the Ridley Commission in 1885-86, the gradual coming into Office after Office of a new type of intellectual organization. Mr. Godfrey Lushington, for instance, from the Home Office, giving evidence before the Ridley Commission in 1886, says, "Mr. Waddington" (in his time, I believe, Mr. Waddington was Chief Permanent Secretary of the Home Office) "would not allow any human being to put a minute on paper except himself. He thought minuting was the exclusive function of the Under-Secretary of State. After his time, the power of minuting came to be given to the Senior Clerk, but even then only for the simpler papers. Now, in consequence mainly of the great increase of work in the Home Office, minuting is done by every one of the clerks of the Upper Division, and it is a great relief to the Office and it greatly adds to the interest which the clerks feel in their work." "The work of minuting," he says, "begins quite from the bottom." That was probably especially neces-

sary in dealing with the complex and difficult problems which came before the Colonial Office, and Mr. Meade, of the Colonial Office, told the Ridley Commission, "Now the juniors are encouraged to deal with the most important work, and it is the only way we can get our work done, because we have reduced our numbers. In the old days the juniors were never allowed to touch the important work." In 1882, my friend, who is now Lord Olivier, became a clerk in the Colonial Office, and I used to see a good deal of him and his work. There was no organized afternoon tea at that time, but he and a few "Class I" friends owned a rather doubtful tin of condensed milk, a chipped teapot and a kettle, and I used to go in and have tea with them. I used to envy those men because, by the magnificent sympathy and initiative of the then Secretary of State for the Colonies,\* they were encouraged from the moment they entered the Office to study questions, to think out remedies, and to send *ab initio* their proposals up to the higher officials.

There was by that time beginning to be a general recognition of the need of what Lord Haldane has taught us to call "staff work," and even the need of some thought about those problems of administration which concern all departments instead of concerning only one department. Mr. Robert Lowe complained before the Playfair Commission of 1875, "The Treasury have a great deal of power in preventing people from doing things, but they have not much power in making them do things," and Sir Charles Trevelyan had proposed as early as 1855 that in order to get more creative initiative in the Treasury "the superior establishment of the Treasury should in future be constituted by appointing to it the ablest and best of the clerks of a certain standing in the establishments superintended or controlled by this Office." Some form of that proposal has been put forward by every Royal Commission, I think, that has sat upon the Civil Service, and I am delighted to hear, though I do not know the full details, that steps in that direction have already been taken.

\* Lord Derby was Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1882-85. (ED.)

But no one suggested, no one then dreamed, that second division clerks should think. The second division clerk was not there to think, but to copy, to run about with papers, to add up figures. What could he do with any thoughts if he happened to think them? And when it was proposed before the Ridley Commission in 1886 that the examination of the second division clerks by competition should be a trifle less stupid, the Ridley Commissioners themselves reported "that the character of the examination should not be raised, as it appears now to afford a sufficient test of a good commercial education," commercial education then meaning an education which does not either encourage or permit or enable people to think.

Half the members of any nation belong to the female sex, and during the period corresponding to the introduction of the Order in Council and the Playfair and Ridley Commissions of the 'seventies and 'eighties, women by a series of accidents began to leak into the Civil Service. When a Postmaster-General tried to organize the country Post Offices, it was sometimes difficult to prevent the postmaster's daughter from helping with the work. When we took over the telegraph system from the railways, it was found that many of the best telegraph officials were women. They were there, they were a surprising phenomenon, and in both of those Commissions they were treated with that sort of humour which is considered appropriate to the subject. Mr. Scudamore, who was the permanent head of the newly acquired telegraph service, told the Playfair Commission, with regard to the Clearing House check work, which happened to be done largely by women, "The work, which consists chiefly of faultfinding, is well within the capacity of the female staff, and has been performed by them in a very satisfactory manner." To the male clerk the presence of women seemed so unnatural as to be wicked, and a deputation of male clerks in the Savings Bank Department came before the Playfair Commission and said that women cannot keep accounts, "women cannot pull about heavy ledgers" The notion that the weight of the ledger should fit the clerk, and not the clerk the

weight of the ledger, had not yet penetrated into the Civil Service.

Women came in in much larger numbers when the type-writing machine was invented in America and brought over here; and, at the Ridley Commission, Sir Algernon West, who had been in America and seen typewriting, and who had introduced it into his own department, spoke with real enthusiasm of the female typists. He said: "They are accurate, they are quick, they are cheap, and, there is no superannuation. They come to us," he said, "fully qualified, and their wages are 17s. to 23s. a week." A very few women also came into the Service as we developed the Poor Law and Educational system, as inspectors, for instance, of women's and children's homes, but practically that was the position of women in 1912.

At the same time, by another series of accidents, Boy Clerks began to appear, and the Playfair Commission in 1875 reported that the employment of Boy Clerks is "both desirable and economical." "A very ordinary boy is shown by experience," say the Playfair Commissioners, "early in his career to do more than half a man's work, while he can be got for less than half a man's wages, and the best boys will do more than an average man's work." The best boys and the worst were dismissed at about eighteen into a world in which they were not encouraged to think about anything except getting a crust of bread.

While the Government departments in London were in constant contact with the work that was being done in education, in health, in poor relief, and so on, throughout the country, there was well into the twentieth century no efficient system of intercommunication of ideas between central and local administration. A man who, if he had not been killed in the war, would have been one of the most brilliant Civil Servants ever known, Mr. Hugh Sidgwick, when he went into the Education Office, had a friend who was Inspector of Schools, and the friend offered to show him round some of the schools which he would have to deal with afterwards on paper. Sidgwick asked leave of his official

superior to spend part of his vacation in so doing, and was refused, on the ground that such a proposal was inconsistent with that measure of decent separation which should divide the administrator from the person who does the work.

In the years which followed the Ridley Commission there was also a rapid increase in the numbers of professional experts, doctors, architects, accountants, and particularly lawyers,\* who were appointed in a haphazard way, with no attempt to co-ordinate their work or their position or their method of appointment and promotion with those of the officials who entered by competitive examinations.

Then, after twenty-six years, in 1912—the Ridley Commission reported in 1886—there came the Macdonnell Commission.\* That Commission—of which Miss Haldane and I were members—tried to give the examinations some connection with the national educational system, to bring it about that the State which taught the boys and girls whom they afterwards employed should have some regard to the stage of education they were likely to have reached in fixing the age of examination and the subjects in which they were to be examined. The Commission was absolutely unanimous in condemning the “blind alley” arrangement of the Boy Clerk, and the Boy Clerk in that sense disappeared, I think for all time. We had moments of strain and anxiety on the question of the intellectual initiative of women. It used to turn on the question, “Is a typewriter a machine or a human being?” and that problem produced, I remember, an occa-

\* The Macdonnell Commission sat from March 1912 to 1914, and issued five reports. Graham Wallas, together with two or three other members, offered reservations to many of the chief recommendations made by the majority, and these appear in each of the reports. He wished to see the creation of an administrative class which would include more than the very narrow group proposed by the majority, and especially that there might be an opportunity of promotion to this class for holders of other posts involving administrative work, but not so classified. He was strongly in favour of the employment of women in the public service, and wished the hard and fast regulation of compulsory retirement on marriage to be abolished, and that there should be avenues of promotion for women who had entered as short-hand typists. These views have been, to a large extent, embodied in later reforms. (Ed.)

sion when our Chairman went out of the room hurriedly, and we had to send a Bishop after him to fetch him back. But I think that woman in the Civil Service owes something of her position to our labours. We also tried to introduce some system into the method of appointing the professional expert, and his relation to the rest of the office.

It was not very long before the war broke out, and the war required every ounce of intellectual initiative which the whole Service could provide, and it may be counted to the Civil Service for righteousness that it was found to be possible for the Offices to expand as they expanded during the war by putting the existing officials to teach and direct the newcomers.

Since the war, the sense of danger in the air has grown more menacing. The kind of relation which we have built up after centuries of conflict and effort in England between Parliament and the Executive Government is on its trial. One has only to look round Europe to see how serious that trial now is. It is under those circumstances, under the post-war conditions, that a little group of Civil Servants got together and determined to form the Institute of Public Administration, which should be both the means of discussing the nature of their art among Civil Servants, and a means of providing the same help to the organized community in the way of ideas and authoritative experience which is provided by the learned Societies in other sciences.

What has the Institute done? In its discussions, in the friendships, the personal friendships, which have arisen with no relation whatever to official grades among its members, and in its admirable Journal, it has, I hope, done something to advance the science of Public Administration. It has quite lately come into close contact with the Universities, and the Universities have, I think, very wisely, thrown themselves with enthusiasm into the business of creating an Administrative Science. That connection had already shown itself to some degree before the Institute was made. When, in 1895, my friends Mr. Sidney Webb and Lord Haldane created the London School of Economics, we found that our best students

were people who came to us from the Civil Service, very often only in their evenings, and that the men who, being Civil Servants and having a deep acquaintance with their work, co-operated with us in producing a series of books—in particular, I think of Mr. Henry W. Macrosty and Sir Josiah Stamp—did, I think, show how much, even in what was then a very small Institution, could be done by the co-ordination of the intellectual work of a University with that of the Civil Service. Owing to the initiative of your Institute, practically every University has now come into the scheme, nearly every University has appointed a Lecturer or Professor of Public Administration, nearly every University in England is holding classes with special reference to the requirements of central and local officials.

One of the questions on which I was constantly engaged as a member of the Macdonnell Commission was how you ought to prepare a clever young man who has been doing comparatively subordinate and routine work in the second division for promotion into the first division? My own experience in the University suggests that if you can set him to work upon a really stiff piece of intellectual creation, collecting facts and thinking constructively about them, you can try him out in that way, as we try out a thesis writer before giving him a higher degree. I remember that when Sir Herbert Samuel was Postmaster-General he and I tried an experiment by getting a University provided scholarship for a young second-division clerk so that he could go abroad and prepare a report on differential postal rates; and I remember asking Sir George Murray, at the Macdonnell Commission, whether it might not be possible to “second” a promising second-division clerk for a special inquiry of that kind, instead of merely shifting him at once from routine work to administrative work. I remember Sir George Murray, with all the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries behind his voice, saying, “I think it would be much better that he should do his work.”

Another pet scheme of mine was that we should get rid of the deadening monotony, or lessen the deadening monotony,

of much official work by a greater use of machines. When an engineer wants a copy of a drawing made, he does not now sit down and copy it with compasses, and so on: he puts it into a big cylinder where there is a great arc light and sensitive paper, and he gets a photograph in a moment. When I was on the Royal Commission we found that the question of what machines should be used in the office—the calculating machines or reproducing machines, produced by the elaborate and wonderful ingenuity of the American nation—depended on the report of a gentleman who was an expert in the wholesale price of paper. And I am not sure that the scheme which is constantly being proposed with regard to the transference of officials from one section in a Department, or even one Department, to another, as a means of creating intellectual stimulus has been carried out to the extent that was hoped by successive Royal Commissions.

On the Macdonnell Commission we spent nearly a year considering very carefully that part of the Civil Service which has to think not for our nation only but for the world—the Foreign Office. We made certain suggestions to His Majesty's Ministers, but there was one suggestion of my own that I tried in vain to get my fellow-commissioners to support. I said, I remember, that we had Naval Attachés in the various Embassies, we had Military Attachés, and we now had Commercial Attachés. All these people are permanent. Would it not be possible to have a few, at least temporary, Scientific Attachés? The Embassy might be the temporary home of a young man of science who had to report upon the progress of some particular science in the country he was visiting. We might have a temporary Educational Attaché, or a temporary Health Attaché, and we might bring the Embassies in that direction into closer contact with the work of intellectual co-operation which is directed from Paris and Geneva. It might even happen that among those temporary Attachés there would be one gentleman who would be out there to report on the development abroad of the science of Public Administration.

*Part III*

## EDUCATION



## A CRITICISM OF FROEBELIAN PEDAGOGY

(1901)\*

IT IS A GOOD RULE that when one is about to criticize any part of the work of a great man, one should begin by expressing gratitude for his work taken as a whole; and therefore, with your leave, I will begin by expressing my personal gratitude for the main result of Froebel's long and self-sacrificing life. I thank him for having done so much to introduce happiness, activity and love into our schools for young children; but especially I would thank him for having helped to bring the science of education into closer relation with the science of life. Professor Withers† pointed out to me the other day that most of the educational writers before Froebel used metaphors for their science derived from the mechanical arts—they were either moulding clay, or building with stones, or drawing upon white paper; but since Froebel's time and, to a certain extent, because of Froebel's work, the metaphors are now all drawn from life, and it is as superintending the growth of living things that we who are engaged in education, either as teachers or administrators, have come to look at the task before us.

\* Address to the Conference of the Froebel Society, January, 1901.  
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I understand that since 1901 considerable changes have been effected in the training of Froebel teachers, and in the actual methods used in the Infant Schools and Kindergartens. The theory of the symbolic train of thought, with the use of the "gifts," "occupations," etc., has been abandoned. The humanities, especially History and English, are now much more fully catered for in the training courses approved by the National Froebel Union. In general, while in 1901 the pedagogy of Froebel was interpreted in a fairly literal way, Froebelians of the present time, while still holding his fundamental principles, are strongly influenced by modern psychology in their interpretation of his pedagogy (Ed.)

† Professor H. L. Withers (1864-1902), then Professor of Education at Owens College, Manchester. (Ed.)

Now, in transferring teaching from a mechanical to a biological art, Froebel was, of course, largely aided by the time in which he lived. We often speak as if the great question as to the origin and nature of species in living things was first raised by Darwin's work in the middle of the nineteenth century. As a matter of fact, there was an earlier period of intense mental activity on that point, roughly coincident with the first twenty years or so of that century. One has only to mention the names of Schelling, Okén, Lamarck, and Krause—names which are now, to most of us in this room, somewhat shadowy, and which, perhaps, recall to us encyclopaedia articles and chapters in histories of philosophy rather than much personal reading of their books—to realize that there was then an important body of men inquiring most keenly into the questions. What is the relation between the individual living thing and the species to which it belongs; and, especially, what is the relation between one species and another? For his share in that inquiry the circumstances of Froebel's life admirably equipped him. He was no mere book student of these things. In his early youth he had lived in the forest, and had had to think of the forest animals and trees not as stuffed or dried specimens or as names in catalogues, but as beings with a life and character of their own; and, later on, as the keeper of a museum, he had gained a rather extensive acquaintance with some sections, at any rate, of natural science. One is not surprised, therefore, to find that what Froebel says about biology, and particularly about the great speculative questions concerned with the origin of species, often has a curiously modern sound for one who comes to it fresh from reading the mid-century controversies. For instance, Froebel points out that the seeds of vegetables are, in their structure, extremely like the very simplest animals; that is to say, that, at its beginning, all life, animal and vegetable, is almost the same; and he goes on to say: "Thus, inasmuch as the law of the individual part is repeated in the whole, the totality of all mundane forms, although but a small part of the great universe, is, nevertheless, relatively a great individual, organized and organic

whole. The animals, too, constitute, again, a great organic whole—seemingly one living form”<sup>1</sup> And one feels the significance of his reference to “the remains of perished ages,” the species which died and whose remains did so much to guide inquirers like Lyell and afterwards Darwin. Or again he points out the curious likeness and unlikeness of “the arm and hand of a man and the wing of a bird,” and observes that “the caterpillar, the butterfly, and other insects in form and colour are connected with the plants to which they seem to belong . . . this external resemblance serves to protect the animals” (*ibid*, p. 312).

Now, in looking at this problem—the diversity and unity within each species and the relation of species among themselves—the early speculative biologists at the beginning of the nineteenth century were almost compelled, by the facts which they observed, to conclude that the formation, the development, the evolution (to use our own word) of both individuals and species came from within. They thought that each individual, since it developed from within, required only freedom and nourishment to attain perfection according to the law of its species. Especially did their observation of plants, which grew to such symmetrical perfection if left with sun and air in a properly situated plot, and of crystals, which were apparently formed from within by their own inner law, convince them that their theory of evolution from within had been thoroughly established. And Froebel added to the evidence his own sympathetic knowledge of the unfolding of the instincts, both in the young of animals and in the young of man. Let me read to you that with which you must all be familiar—the eloquent passage in which Froebel, at the beginning of that chapter from *The Education of Man* which he calls “The Foundation of the Whole,” explains his philosophy in this matter. He says.

We must presuppose that the still young human being, even though as yet unconsciously, like a product of Nature, precisely and surely wills that which is best for himself, and, moreover, in a form quite suitable to him, and which he feels within himself the

<sup>1</sup> *The Education of Man* (Häuffmann’s translation), p. 197

disposition, power and means, to represent . . . So the young duckling hastens to the pond and into the water; while the chicken scratches in the earth, and the young swallow catches his food on the wing, and rarely touches the earth . . . We give time and space to young plants and young animals, knowing that they then beautifully unfold and grow well in conformity with the laws which act on each individual; we let them rest, and strive to avoid powerfully interfering influences upon them, knowing that these influences disturb their pure unfolding and healthy development. But the young human being is to man a piece of wax, a lump of clay, from which he can mould what he will. Men, who wander through your fields, gardens and groves, why do you not open your minds to receive what Nature, in dumb speech, teaches you? Look at the plants which you call weeds, and which, grown up here compressed and constrained, scarcely permit one to guess at their inner symmetry; but look at them in free space, in field and flower-bed, and see what a symmetry, what a pure life they show, harmonizing in all parts and expressions! A regular sun, a radiating star of the earth springs up.\*

Or, again, speaking of the child, he says:

All his activities, all his will, must proceed from and refer to the development, the improvement, and the representation of the inner (*ibid.*, p. 59).

Now this conception of the whole world as the expression of the inner will, the inner law of each thing and of the whole, produced an enthusiasm and an exhilaration of spirit among the transcendental biologists who wrote during Froebel's early life greater, I think, than that recorded of any other purely philosophical movement of which I have read. It seemed that if men would only be humble, if they would only stand aside and allow Nature's own law to work itself out, there would be revealed a radiantly simple answer to all the most difficult problems of human life. "Let us then follow Nature," they said, "let us"—to use Froebel's words—"gain firmness from the conviction that Nature must necessarily have not only an outward general cause, but an inward

\* *The Education of Man* (translation by J. Jarvis), p. 5.

acting cause (recognizable even in the smallest detail);” (ibid., p. 133), and let us be sure that “the vigorous and complete development and cultivation of each following stage rests upon the vigorous, complete and individual development of each preceding stage of life” (ibid., p. 18)

Froebel, as you know, died in 1852. Seven years later, in 1859, the whole science of biology was revolutionized by the publication of Charles Darwin’s *Origin of Species*, and to me it is very interesting to wonder what would have happened had Froebel lived and maintained his mental activity for another ten years, or, had Darwin been possessed of stronger health and had he published, as he easily might have done, his book ten years earlier. What would so patient a student of Nature, so candid and sincere a man as Froebel, have made of Darwin’s *Origin of Species*? For the change made by Darwin was enormous. As Aristotle declared that Socrates brought down philosophy from the heavens to the earth, so we can say that Darwin transferred the cause of development from within to without. Darwin demonstrated that, while it is true that there is a tendency in each living thing towards variation, yet the variation is in itself indifferent, and that the formative cause which *selects* variations and produces those permanent changes which we call the development of species must be looked for in the environment of the individual, and not in any inner tendency. For a moment it seemed as if the followers of Darwin would feel the same exhilaration, the same enthusiasm, as had their predecessors, the transcendental biologists. Just for a moment they, too, seemed to have a perfectly easy answer for every possible question. Some of them said: “Since everything is done by the struggle for Nature, therefore let *us* follow Nature; let us stand aside and let the struggle take place—as much risk, as much competition, as much fighting as possible, and the world will become perfect.” But the idea of unimpeded struggle is not in itself so attractive as the idea of unimpeded growth, and the Darwinians were not as greatly tempted as the transcendentalists to leave the laborious and uncertain element of human thought and contrivance out of account.

Especially was this true in education. From the beginning of the Darwinian reconstruction of the moral sciences it was absurd, while speaking of "environment," to ignore the fact that the deliberate care and contrivance of the parent must form a large part of the environment of the child.

It is true that the child comes to his parent with an immense number of tendencies, of instincts, of laws of growth already formed by the slow selection and adaptation of many preceding ages, but they are formed by adaptation to those ages, and therefore not necessarily to our own. We cannot, therefore, now say "Let us follow Nature" with the old feeling that we thereby free ourselves from the "intolerable disease" of responsible thought. If "Nature" means anything, and it is difficult to find a use for that word which is not misleading, then we ourselves and our anxieties are part of Nature. The child will not of itself "grow" into perfect harmony with its surroundings; it must, in part, be "made" during its own life, and we must bear our conscious share in the making.

The educational task therefore for us is not to find out how completely we can stand aside and let the child's "inner law" develop itself, but how far we can so far influence the environment of the child as to cause those tendencies in it which we think best to become permanent, and how far we can ourselves create tendencies which but for our action would not have appeared at all. This, again, means that the question as to what tendencies are "best" is not settled for us by any simple rule. And perhaps the most difficult point in modern education is the fact that we cannot hope to arrive at a complete agreement even as to the principles on which we should decide what tendencies are "best." Something, however, in the way of a working agreement we can reach. All of us would admit that the selecting principle in education must have reference not only to the present life of the child, but to its future—that we must select those tendencies which will enable a child to live its *whole* life best. All of us, indeed, do so, and must do so, whatever our

theories may be. Our babies are born already with a whole bundle of "spontaneous activities," from which we at once begin to select with reference to their future life. They are born, for instance, with an amazing power of clinging, so that they can raise their own weight by clinging to a stick. If we expected them to live as savages, we should encourage that tendency, so that the mother could work with her baby clinging to her back. But we intend them for a "civilized" life, and therefore we let that power die out. We prefer to train the baby from the first few hours of its life to sleep when it is not sleepy, and to eat when it is not hungry, because our civilized life can only be lived in comfort by human beings who are hungry twice or three times in every day, and who absolutely forget hunger meanwhile, and who go regularly to sleep and regularly wake up at certain definite hours in the twenty-four. In sleeping and feeding we deliberately develop a set of instincts which would be absolutely disastrous to a hunting tribe.

You may say that Froebel himself knew all this as well as anyone else; he was not a theorist living among books and settling the art of education as one form of words or another pleased him; he was a sensitive man, who lived for the greater part of his life in daily and hourly contact with young children, and was well aware of the difficulties of his work. You may ask why should we trouble about Froebel's philosophy when we are concerned only with those rules of education which Froebel, from his own experience, developed? I must answer that Froebel himself would have been extremely angry if anyone had so argued to him. Whoever divorced his educational system from his philosophy would have seemed to Froebel to have taken all the force and meaning out of his life's work. To a philosopher the distinction between his experience and his philosophy cannot exist. His philosophy is his own interpretation of his experience; and if we examine either the details of Froebel's system, or the schools in which that system takes shape, we are forced to recognize that here is no mere gathering of disconnected educational precepts, but in large part at least, a reasoned

derivation from an organized body of thought. That body of thought was, in the main, the transcendental pre-Darwinian biology, whose outlines I have already given you in Froebel's words. If we give up that system of thought in whole or in part—and I suppose that no one here is ready to defend it—we must expect also to give up some part of the educational system which was founded on it. When I have criticized details in Kindergarten education I have been constantly told: "The disciples, we know, have made mistakes: we must\* go back to the master." But unless you are prepared to defend your master's philosophy, merely to go back to your master's words is to prevent yourself from profiting either by his example or by the development of truth since his time.

What, then, are the practical points in teaching on which an educational philosopher holding Froebel's general principles was most likely to go wrong? In the first place, one who believed that development comes from within, and not from without, was likely to under-estimate the influence of that body of traditional knowledge which is handed down, so to speak, outside the child, and which affects him as part of his environment, and to over-estimate the influence of the instincts which are handed down in the child, and which affect him from within. Froebel was especially likely to do this. He constantly made use of the analogy between the young child and the young animal, and in his time no one had shown, as Mr. Seton Thompson and Mr. Lloyd Morgan have begun to show in our time, how great a part traditional knowledge, handed down through instruction by the old generation and imitation by the new, plays in the upbringing of young wild animals.\* Froebel also lived in an age when the very existence of spontaneously acting instinct in the young child was implicitly denied, and when education too often took the form of getting by rote a mass of disconnected scraps of information which seemed useful to the adults who

\* Ernest Seton Thompson's (later Thompson Seton) *Wild Animals I have known* appeared in 1898, and his *Lives of the Hunted* in 1901.

C. Lloyd Morgan's *Animal Behaviour* appeared in 1900. (Ed.)

taught them, but which were meaningless drudgery to the unfortunate children who had to learn them. .

Both causes inclined Froebel to exaggerate the influence of the "inner" in education, and, indeed, in the moments when his philosophy is strongest upon him he writes as if the whole body of human knowledge, in so far as it is handed down by tradition, and not by instinct, is needless, and that its increase is an evil. "It would prove," he says, "a boon to our children and a blessing to coming generations if we could but see that we possess a great oppressive load of merely external information and culture; that we foolishly seek to increase this from day to day, and that we are very poor in inner knowledge, in information evolved from our own soul and grown up with it."\* And, again, in words that remind one curiously of Plato: ". . . if men are ever to free themselves from the oppressive burden and emptiness of merely extraneously communicated knowledge heaped up in memory; if they would ever rise to the joy and vigour of a knowledge of the inner nature and essence of things, to a living knowledge of things—a knowledge which, like a sound, vigorous tree, like a family or generation full of the joy and consciousness of life, is spontaneously developed from within; if they would cease at last to play in word and deed with the valueless shadows of things, and to go through life in a mask . . ." (ibid., p. 230). And, finally, "That which we can get *into* man we already know and possess as the property of mankind, and everyone, simply because he is a human being, will unfold and develop it out of himself in accordance with the laws of mankind" (ibid., p. 279).

In maintaining this position Froebel had to meet one great and immediate difficulty, and it is curious to notice how he met it. A man can hardly be said to be a man without the power of speech, or to be a fully-developed man without the power of reading and writing; and yet the arts of speech and reading and writing would seem obviously to have been developed not in accordance with an inner law, but by arbitrary convention, and to be handed down from generation

\* *The Education of Man* (Hailmann's translation), p. 231.

to generation not by inner instinct, but by external tradition. Froebel had, however, the courage to declare that even the details of speech and writing were the necessary result of the "inner law," and to imply that they could be spontaneously developed in each child from within. "Language," he says, "is the self-active outward expression of the inner";\* or, again, "each word is the necessary product of certain word-elements, just as each material chemical product is the result of the combination of certain determinate elementary substances" (*ibid.*, p. 213). Vowels represent "unity," consonants "individuality," semi-vowels "diversity" (*ibid.*, p. 216).

One would have thought that the fact that men speak many different languages would have been a sufficient answer to this. But Froebel persuaded himself that these differences are the necessary result of differences of national type, and that "German, Greek and Latin" are "in the relationship of soul, life and body" (*ibid.*, p. 217).

Again, he attempts to show that writing also must come from within. He traces it first, to the "inner desire for pictorial writing," and, next, to the "inner desire for symbolic writing." "Who," asks Froebel, "having the charge of little children, has not been asked for some paper to write a letter to father or brother? The little boy is urged to this by the intensity of his inner life, which he would communicate to these. *It is not imitation, he has seen no one writing*, but he knows how he can gratify his desire" (*ibid.*, p. 222).† But if writing is developed from within, it must be, like speech, a necessary product of the inner law, and not a matter of convention; and, accordingly, Froebel tells us, "although the laws to which letters owe their origin and development have become obscured, the little that is left of their first rudiments seems to point unequivocally to an inner connection between the form and the meaning—e.g., the letter *O* as symbol in the word for the idea of absolute self-limitation, and the letter *S* as symbol in the word for the idea of a return to self. An examination of the original Phoenician and later Roman

\* *The Education of Man* (Hailmann's translation), p. 210.

† The italics are my own.

characters readily reveals in a number of them a definite relation between the form of the letter and the idea it stands for in the word" (*ibid.*, pp. 223-224)

And, further, if reading and writing are to be developed from within, instruction in them must be delayed until the spontaneous tendency to read and write shall have definitely shown itself, so that, Froebel says, "the inner need and desire to know them must have manifested itself clearly and definitely before the boy begins to learn these arts" (*ibid.*, p. 225); and many of his followers to this day seem to think that the postponement of these arts till the latest possible moment is the point in their system best worth fighting for.

The next point on which Froebel's philosophic conception of development from within was likely to influence, and did influence, his educational methods and those of his disciples, was in leading them to attach too much importance to spontaneous interest and too little importance to externally directed attention. This was in part a wholesome reaction from a system of education in which the possibility of spontaneous interest was ignored; but it was a reaction carried much too far. Now that we have abandoned the hope that the actual sensitiveness and retentiveness of the memory can be much increased by education, we are coming to see that the power of attention—the power, to use a psychological term, of *inhabiting* the more vivid image and holding the consciousness upon the less vivid—is the main new faculty which education can give the child. Luckily, attention soon becomes habitual, but its early stages are extraordinarily difficult both to teacher and taught. Every one knows this who has taught a new class, or even attempted to keep a little child's mind on the business of taking his tea. So difficult is it that at first it should only continue for a very short time, and should alternate with periods of "play" in which the child's consciousness should be allowed to follow freely the most vivid impression of the moment. But it is fatal to confuse, as is often done in the Kindergarten, "work" and "play" to such a point as to call them by the same name.

One of the most searching criticisms I ever heard of

Kindergarten methods was given by a very clever boy who has since turned into a very able man. He was sent, at the age of four, into one of the best Kindergartens in the world, and, after a few days' experience of it, said to his father: "Father, I don't like that school. When they play they don't really play, and when they work they don't really work."

There is, however, an art in teaching which is so useful as a preliminary to attention in the early stages, and which brings about results so like attention that they are often confused with it. A skilful teacher can get over the difficulty of training the child to inhibit its more vivid mental images by contriving that the image most desired by the teacher shall always be at the moment the most vivid to the child, just as a mother, in despair at inducing her child to be "good" at a meal, will, by removing the doll out of sight and playing surprising tricks with the bread-and-butter, keep his interest directed towards the food, without raising the question of being "good" at all. Indeed, many, perhaps most, Kindergartners would deny that there is any difference whatever between interest and attention, and if in consequence the brightest child in their class cannot pass a simple examination, are apt to ascribe this fact to the faults of the "examination system." Unfortunately the life which the civilized man must lead, unless he has a large independent income, is much more like an examination than a class. Froebel's own attempts at the sciences of crystallography and philology and botany are, indeed, a warning that human knowledge is increased, not by the ecstatic following of one's own most vivid impulses, but by concentration on a succession of difficult and uncertain inferences relating to some uninteresting subdivision even of the most interesting subject.

But to admit this is to deny the optimistic view of the whole problem of education which Froebel inherited from Rousseau. If education was to follow the line of natural and spontaneous development, it seemed as if every lesson must necessarily—if Nature is good—follow the line of greatest immediate happiness. Froebel would have asked: Shall we sacrifice

the child to the man, and consider like the conventional schoolmasters of the eighteenth century, that a miserable childhood is the best preparation for a happy manhood? I suppose that we must answer that, in a sense, the child must be sacrificed to the man, just as each hour of childhood itself must be looked on as part of the day, and each day as part of the complete year. The education of a child who will die at ten should be different from that of one who is expected to live till fifty. We might even end by a trite reference to the admitted truth that there are some forms of happiness that can only be gained by opposing, and, when necessary, overcoming one's impulses.

So far I have spoken of three tendencies—the contempt for direct instruction, the neglect to form the habit of attention, and the identification of the happiness of the moment with the happiness of the whole life, which I believe to result from Froebel's philosophy—that is to say, from the view which he took, in common with many of the greatest thinkers of his time, of the origin and development of conscious life in the world.

Now I will try to deal with certain other points in Froebel's educational system with which I do not agree, but which seem to result rather from his own character, or the prevalent habits of his time, than from his philosophy. Froebel, for instance, was inclined to *sentimentalize*, as, indeed, a German of 1820 was bound to do. This fault grew upon him, and has been exaggerated by certain of his followers. The feelings of both teacher and taught are dwelt upon with a certain enjoyment of feeling for its own sake, which is as foreign as possible to the concrete and vigorous mind of the healthy child.

In the course of preparing this address, I read rapidly through all the books of Kindergarten action songs which we, on the recommendation of our skilled advisers, have placed on the Requisition List of the London School Board, and certainly I found some of these songs extremely trying. I will only give you one verse in which the little children sing :

We are but little toddlekins,  
 And can't do much, we know;  
 But still we think we must be nice,  
 For people love us so.

That is one instance, but there are a great many pages of such instances which I could give you, and I could easily give others from Froebel's own *Mutter-und Kose-Lieder*.

Then, again, it is a pure accident of Froebel's individuality that, with the exception of John Bunyan, he wrote worse verse than any other great man from the beginning of time; and here too his followers have imitated him with success. These "action songs" to which I have referred are almost always the easy writing of versifiers without either talent or industry. Any line that can possibly be induced to scan, any word which by any distortion of sound can be made to rhyme, any hackneyed phrase, however unintelligible to a child, which can be put in to save trouble, is to be found in these unspeakable volumes—compared with which the worst hymn-book is noble literature.

It might, perhaps, be contended that Froebel's use of symbolism was necessarily connected with his idea of the development of knowledge from within. But I could imagine the existence of an educator who agreed with Froebel's philosophy and left symbolism alone. Certainly, in the developed Froebelianism, say of Miss Susan Blow,<sup>†</sup> the excessive use of symbolism is, perhaps, the worst fault. One of the very ablest and most sympathetic students of the Kindergarten system, Mr. Stanley Hall,<sup>‡</sup> of Chicago, says, in the January number of last year's *Forum*: "As to the

\**Action Songs*, arranged by Wilhelmina L. Rooper, p. 30.

† Author of "The Mottoes and Commentaries of Friedrich Froebel's Mother Play . . . with an Introduction treating of the Philosophy of Froebel" (1895), and "Letters to a Mother on the Philosophy of Froebel" (1899). (Ed.)

‡ Stanley Granville Hall (1846-1924). At that time President and Professor of Psychology, Clark University Founder of the *American Journal of Psychology*, and author of numerous works on the psychology of education. (Ed.)

Froebelian gifts, the inner action theory and the scheme of analysing to a point and then developing from it are fantastic and superficial, and it is persistently forgotten that the meaning, seen or claimed, exists solely for the teacher, and not at all for the child."

Nor do I think that it is a necessary result of Froebel's main position that he should treat, as he often does, the various stages in the development of the child as if they were exclusive and not overlapping, and should delay the appearance of each stage much longer than is normally found, at any rate in the town-bred child. The dominance, for instance, of imagination is exaggerated, and a little boy is made to sing:

What are we going to do to-day?  
Not bricks to build, or sticks to lay . . .

who is thoroughly aware that that is exactly what he is going to do, and who is perfectly willing to do it, but to whom the whole imaginative pretence has become a dreary make-believe. Again, the duration and exclusiveness of the stage which writers on the Kindergarten identify with

the stage of direct observation without inference or abstraction—is enormously exaggerated. A child who can, and does, reason, remember and abstract, is treated as if he could do none of these things. A child, for instance, who can deal freely with abstract number is treated as incapable of doing anything but see and feel certain blocks and balls. The consequence is that he forms a clumsy mathematical language for himself, and, perhaps, is hampered all his life through in any attempt at true mathematical thinking.

I cannot end my criticism of Froebel's pedagogy without attempting to meet the general objection. "After all, the only test of an educational method is its *result*. Why have you not told us more of the actual effect of Kindergarten methods on the boys and girls who have been through the system, instead of saying so much on the faults which you would expect to find?" On this it would be difficult to produce evidence that would convince you. The most important testimony must come from those secondary-

school teachers who have received pupils for many years in succession both from Froebelian and non-Froebelian preparatory schools. But you can always retort to them that, since the non-Froebelian schools make a business of subordinating their work to the work of the more advanced school, and since you do not do so, their evidence must be received with suspicion. I have been an assistant master, and I know myself how, at every step in the educational ladder, the master above you is apt to insist that all your work should be sacrificed in order to be prepared for his work. But, nevertheless, I will give such testimony of the kind as I have collected for what it is worth, and I think that, if it is sympathetically given and carefully received, it is worth a great deal. I seem to find a general consensus of opinion on one or two points. As to the charm of manner, the spontaneity and delightfulness of the best Kindergarten children, I think nearly all are agreed. They say, however, that they are a little "soft"—I use the word because it has been used by several secondary teachers to me without knowing what the others had said—they are too often unable to make any serious or sustained effort, and they are unaware of the nature of the process by which real human knowledge is extended or acquired. Now, if this is true, it means that the pure Kindergarten system of education is especially dangerous to those whose powers or whose circumstances will lead them to be brain-workers, and particularly and assuredly is it dangerous for those children of poor parents who have to fight their way, in spite of difficulties, up into the intellectual life, because those children can only do so through *books*. A child who has, through all his school life, to be one of a class of forty, or fifty, or sixty under a tired teacher cannot enter into the inheritance of the past and the understanding of the present except through the written words of great men. There is one passage which I would have every Kindergarten teacher read, not once a year, but once a month, and that is the passage in *Sesame and Lilies* where Ruskin speaks of the kings and princes who stand silently waiting for us upon the shelves of our book-cases, and reproves us

for striving if by any chance we can get a casual nod from some great man, while there the most intimate thoughts of the greatest men are ready to our hand. Great is the responsibility of those who for a moment unnecessarily postpone the power of access to those great writers whom teacher and taught can revere alike.

My criticism is finished, and I thank you for the patience with which you have listened to it. And now, if the Chairman should suddenly call upon me to "conclude with a motion"; if he should say, "What is it you are leading up to, what is it that you want us to do?" I should answer, in the first place, that I want you to follow out Froebel's example in making an absolutely free approach to the problem before you, in availing yourselves as freely and as fully of modern psychology and modern biology, as he did and you do of the biology and psychology of a century ago. And next I should warn you that, although for many purposes, and especially for the purpose of arousing enthusiasm, it is an advantage to centre your work around the life and teaching of one master, yet it is an advantage which can be bought too dear. And, lastly, I should say that the Froebel Society would do well to consider that the most important practical need in education is economy. We are here for so short a time, there is so much to do, that we cannot afford at any moment to do the less good thing. Keep the brightness, the spontaneity, the activity which Froebel has given to us; but carefully weigh every hour and every day, fixing your thoughts on that which is omitted as well as on that which is done. Do not confine yourselves to those forms of external Nature which were familiar to Froebel. It is to me a sorrowful thing that the Froebel Union's examination, while it most carefully sifts and examines and organizes the preparation for lessons in elementary science, treats, apparently, as of smaller importance those great humanistic subjects of literature and of history whose influence may be felt in the teaching even of very young children.

We who are responsible for the direction of the British Empire, now, and in that near future whose citizens we are

training, have the severest of all tasks before us. Indeed, at no time in the world's history has the world had so great and strange a problem before it. For the first time the whole world is conscious of itself. Every race is now neighbour to every other, and has need of sympathy and understanding keen and bold enough to stretch across the thousand miles of ocean. In this great moment of the world's history, I call upon you, who have by so much worthy labour gained so great an authority in directing the education of young children, to see that you set to your work with as much resolution and sincerity as did Froebel himself; so that neither the pleasure of the moment, nor your own sympathies, nor the homely feeling of old tradition shall persuade you to do that which, whether it is good or not, is less good, in place of the more difficult best of all.

## LET YOUTH BUT KNOW (1906)\*

ASSALLE SAID, that the "damned wantlessness" of the German working man was the main hindrance to social reform "Kappa," in the searching and pathetic chapters which he has republished from the *Westminster Gazette*, pleads against the "damned wantlessness" of the English public school boy and undergraduate.

He is not the first to point out the defects in the curriculum of our endowed schools. Public school masters, like Mr. Salt, who, because they took their profession seriously, have left it; writers on education, from Sir James Mackintosh to Mr. Wells, even the poor parent in his letters to *The Times*, have each in his own way made the same complaint. What is new is the emphasis which Kappa lays on the fact that it is not simply a change of curriculum that is wanted but a change of stimulus. He points out that an able boy may pass creditably through the classical side of a great school and remain with intellectual interest and desire entirely unawakened. He might have added that four years later he may come back as a master still unawakened and retire, an aged child, at seventy. Into the swept and garnished heart other desires may enter of which the organized hysteria of competitive athleticism is defended as at least the safest.

Intellectual desire is awakened in boys most easily by sympathy with feeling in others, and the original *Westminster* articles were so eloquent and poignant an appeal to feeling that if Kappa would strip off all the interesting apparatus of notes and replies which swell them to a volume and would

\* First published in the *Speaker*, January 20, 1906, as a review of "Kappa"'s "Let Youth but Know a plea for reason in education" (1905). (ED.)

publish them in paper at a shilling, a small fund should be collected for sending them to every sixth-form boy under seventeen and every public school master under thirty in England.

Men are, indeed, to be found on the staff of almost every public school who would admit the justice of Kappa's complaint; but they believe as a rule that the schools are reforming themselves. They will point to the formation of a "modern side" for the intellectually destitute, or a cramming class for the army, or to the fact that last term Miss Jane Harrison gave a lantern lecture on Greek art, and that the composition master and the French master went for a walk together. Here and there "a chorus ending from Euripides," a history lesson, the appeal of the past in the school buildings or the school ritual, helps to turn a public school child into a youth. The mere fact that the elder boys have to keep order does something to check that utterly irresponsible concentration on "having a good time" which prevails, one is told, in the schools for the rich in America. But when all allowances are made the verdict stands.

It is not enough, however, to praise Kappa. He challenges all of us who have to do with education to say what we propose as a remedy, and, in effect, his challenge is most directly addressed to those reformers who believe that the traditions of Liberalism still have some value. To those others to whom the whole social question simplifies itself into a "class-war" between the haves and the have-nots the present state of things is perfectly satisfactory. The English governing class is every year growing politically weaker. Already the monopoly of office by the public school "gentlemen" is being broken through, and men are being admitted to Cabinets who had their schooling in the incredible national schools and commercial academies of thirty and forty years ago. Every governing body who appoints a clerical and athletic headmaster to carry on the "old spirit," every boy who bullies another for trying to learn, every hour that is spent in the imitation of the worst Latin writers of elegiacs, quickens the process by which thirty years hence the English

governing class may become as politically powerless as the sons and grandsons of American millionaires. "Liberalism" may die in England as it has died in Germany; and the field may be cleared for a fight between labour and capital. If the trained intellect is still to have a place in politics it may be drawn from those who are now holding science scholarships in "third grade secondary" schools or who are preparing at evening classes for degrees at the new universities.

But if Liberalism means anything the fact that it shares its name with a "liberal" education is no mere accident. Historically it has stood both here and abroad for the belief that the unbribed love of knowledge and beauty leads the elect to the love of mankind, that Heine's "Ritter des heiligen Geistes" are recruited not only in the workshop but in the study. Its justification is to be found in the existence of that very "wantlessness" for all but food and rest of which Lassalle complained, and against which every leader of social reform has had to fight.

To Liberals, therefore, the future of those universities and public schools by whose endowments the "dead hand" controls the education of the leisured classes in England is of real importance, and Kappa's suggestion of a strong Commission which should deal with schools and universities as part of one system ought to be seriously considered by a Liberal Cabinet. Such a Commission on the "Intellectual Wantlessness of Endowed Education" would have to face the social question in its most delicate form. It would have to reform the regulations which are deliberately intended to confine the maintenance scholarships at the older foundations to the children of the well-to-do. If this frightened away the mere snobs from Eton and Winchester so much the better. The introduction of a quota of boys, drawn from all classes, of high intellectual capacity and good preliminary training would do no more. On the other hand, if we are to be warned by the American example, any dealing with the "oppidans" which turned the main body of the sons of the well-to-do into private schools under no kind of public control would be bad for the State.

The religious question would also come before such a Commission in a new form. The shallowness of the intellectual and emotional life in most public schools is very largely due to the understood compromise by which the clerical head-master abstains from pushing his religious control beyond a certain point, while the lay assistants keep silence with regard to all serious thought or feeling on the subjects studied. Kappa pleads that boys should be trained to feel the significance of the "Human Saga." But under present conditions it is precisely that significance to which no reference must be made. Boys and masters must read the *Phaedo* or the *Republic* without a hint that Plato is entitled to be heard on the question of human immortality or social justice, and the *Antigone* without a hint that Greek views as to the providential government of the world have anything but an antiquarian interest for the fortunate inheritors of the Thirty-Nine Articles. Boys may read biology, but may not be referred to the letters in which Darwin and Lyell wrestled together in spirit. The mathematics of astronomy may be taught, but the tremendous aspect of the cosmos must be hidden. It is better to confine oneself to the "final Cretic" than to show one's feelings, and best of all to have no feelings to show.

The tact and responsibility of the teacher in times of religious change and the habitual reticence of the English gentleman will perhaps prevent, at least during the twentieth century, that absolute openness of heart in the class-room which Kappa desires. But the present state of things is intolerable. The arrangement by which an Anglican governing body and a clerical head master superintend the reading of pre-Christian philosophy and scientific history by lay teachers to the children of Jews and agnostics may be broken through any moment from the Anglican side. The *Church Times* calls at intervals upon the Church to assert herself and to insist that the history teaching in the public schools shall be based on that way of conceiving the past which is called "Church history." No one knows when a clerical head master may be seized with an un-English

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impulse, either to believe or to disbelieve his religion. Oxford and Cambridge, on the other hand, since they were undenominationalized by the last strong Liberal Government, have shown how practically the same body of men as the public school masters can teach with no other restrictions than those of good sense and good feeling the very boys who come to them, too late, from the public schools. It is not by mere "tinkering at time-tables," but by making teaching free under strong and free governing bodies that the reform of the English public schools must begin.

## OXFORD AND THE NATION (1908)\*

LAST YEAR, ON JULY 24TH, the Bishop of Birmingham asked in the House of Lords whether the Government were prepared to appoint a Royal Commission "to inquire into the endowment, government, administration, and teaching of the older Universities and their colleges, in order to secure the best use of their resources for the benefit of all classes of the community." Lord Crewe replied that the Government before coming to a decision on the question desired to know what "the most thoughtful and competent opinion at the Universities demanded," and "whether there does exist at the Universities anything like a dead weight of obstruction which could only be removed by statute."

Since then nine months and two Oxford terms have passed and nothing has been either done, or even authoritatively suggested, by the University itself in the way of serious reform.

It is therefore clear that if Lord Crewe rightly indicated the policy of the Government—and the new Premier, with his Balliol record behind him, is not likely to be less interested in Oxford reform than his predecessor†—a Royal Commission should now be appointed.

It is not necessary to blame the University for not reforming itself. No machinery exists in the constitution of Oxford suitable for such a purpose; neither the Hebdomadal Council nor Congregation, nor Convocation, have the staff or the wide representation of interests or the combination of initiative and responsibility which would be necessary for

\* First published in the *Westminster Gazette*, April 28, 1908. (Ed.)

† Asquith succeeded Campbell-Bannerman as Prime Minister on April 8, 1908. (Ed.)

such a task. Individual members of the University can talk and think—Lord Curzon and the Vice-Chancellor, for instance, have both, it is said, been talking and thinking—but individuals are naturally shy of appearing to claim an authority which they do not possess.

And the objection to a policy of “reform from within” goes deeper than this. The complaint against those persons who, either as members of colleges or as members of the various University bodies, constitute “Oxford” at this moment is that, as trustees for large sums of money and a valuable educational organization, they have not fully or wisely carried out the duties of their trust. Members of a body so accused can hardly work out a scheme for their own reform. It is impossible that they should take an outside and impartial view of their position. They are bound to feel themselves on their defence. None of them can propose any large or sweeping change without feeling not only that he is blaming himself, but also—what is even more disagreeable to a member of a close and sensitive corporation—that he is being guilty of disloyalty to his colleagues. Nor is he even quite sure what the accusation against him is. In the absence of a Commission, no charge can be made except on the authority of individuals outside the University, who are just as likely as individuals within the University to seem irresponsible busybodies.

But, nevertheless, if a Commission is to be appointed, those who ask for it must obviously make out a *prima facie* case, and in that respect the reformers, both inside and outside the University, seem to be fairly well agreed. There is nothing new, and nothing particularly discreditable to the University, in the case that is made out against it. Any body of trustees whose constitution does not allow full representation of all the interests affected by the objects of the trust will always tend to act, not in the interests of those objects, but in the interests of themselves. They will do so, not out of any wicked or deep-laid scheme, but because in each discussion which takes place a compact majority will always be found to be convinced by those arguments which lead

towards a comfortable life. For instance, any body of men—whether the officers of a regiment or ship, the staff of a Government office, or the directors of a railway company—will always prefer that those who are associated with them should belong to the same class as themselves and should be pleasant to get on with. This tendency has apparently been the cause of many of those matters in the conduct of the University of which reformers unanimously complain. Admission to the University is both too easy and too difficult, and its ease and difficulty alike give preference to the “gentleman.” Greek, for instance, is now studied by few except the members of the former English governing class, and no one is allowed to enter on an Oxford degree course without some knowledge of Greek. But a real knowledge of Greek would exclude a number of very pleasant and gentlemanly young fellows, and therefore the standard demanded is low. Again, even in the low standard demanded, there is the same discrimination. It was proposed the other day in Congregation that the Greek entrance examination should require the standard which an intelligent young man, who had not specialized in Greek, would easily reach in a few months’ study, and that all minutiae of grammar should be omitted. This proposal was rejected, and the Warden of Wadham, who spoke for the majority, stated that the proposed statute “would certainly exclude from the University a large number of persons (dolts, it might be) who would be advantaged by coming there,” and whom, it seems, it would be pleasant to have there. His argument apparently was that the athletic and stupid youth who had spent five or six years in reaching the Upper Fifth or Lower Sixth of a public school would know the minutiae of grammar and nothing else, whereas the intelligent young scientist or historian who took up Greek comparatively late would know much else, but would not know the minutiae of grammar. He proposed, therefore, to differentiate in favour of the dolts.

For the same reason scholarships at Oxford are given without any reference to the means of the parents of the students. It is pleasanter to give a scholarship to a boy

from Eton or Winchester, who could easily come without it, than to a boy whose home circumstances make the winning of a scholarship his only chance.

A body of trustees who represent rather individual interests than the general good will also inevitably be conservative in matters of curriculum. Those who are teachers will give a preference to the subjects which they know, against the other subjects, which may be equally, or even more, desirable, which they do not know. This has certainly been the case at Oxford. New subjects have nominally been put into the curriculum, but the colleges have delayed as long as possible in providing teaching in them, have assigned no scholarships for them, and have discouraged their best students from taking them up. From one point of view they can hardly be blamed for doing so, for any attempt on the part of the colleges to keep pace with the new subjects admitted into the University course would swell their teaching staff to enormous proportions. In other words, it has only been by the discouragement of new subjects that the colleges have managed to evade the difficult problem of the efficient organization of University and college teaching. But here again is a subject which it is foolish to hope can be settled "from within." A body of trustees so constituted that they are likely to prefer their own interests as individuals will certainly oppose the proper organization of their work—they will prefer King Log to King Stork. Organization means having to do that which one would rather not do, at a time when one would rather be doing something else, and with an inconvenient degree of concentration.

The teaching arrangements both of the Universities and the colleges are unbusinesslike, and, it must be added, unnecessarily expensive. The tutorial system involves the maintenance of one teacher for every ten or fifteen students who receive individual instruction. At its best it produces admirable results. But there is nothing to ensure that it should, and many things that tend to work in the opposite direction. Much of it is lavished upon passmen, and recalls the proverb about cutting blocks with razors. Post-graduate

teaching, which is troublesome and requires new knowledge and thought, is discouraged in favour of the routine preparation of lads for examination; and the task of reforming the examination system from within is enormously difficult in the face of the habits and prejudices and vested interests which have grown up around it.

Good organization further means the superannuation of any man who is unfit by age or incapacity, but it is only human nature for a man to refuse to acknowledge that he is too old for his work. There is therefore no system of superannuation, and no financial arrangements which would make it possible.

The finances of both the University and colleges are, indeed, in hopeless confusion; and that fact alone would more than justify the appointment of a Commission. Men do not like to accuse each other of the mismanagement of corporate property, and yet mismanagement is glaringly obvious. Some of the colleges have more money than they can readily spend; while other colleges, and the University itself, are so starved that they cannot do their work even with the bare minimum of efficiency. Of late years a few colleges have so far recognized this as to grant casual doles to the University chest; but these doles, depending as they do on the accidental majority at a college meeting, are so uncertain as well as so trifling in amount, as rather to increase than decrease the permanent confusion.

Moreover, every college has its own separate business organization for the management of its estates and other property. This in itself involves a great deal of waste and overlapping, unavoidable without a radical alteration of system. The same difficulties were surmounted in the case of the Deans and Chapters three-quarters of a century ago by the establishment of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. A similar body of Academical Commissioners might perform the same service for the University and the colleges. But *amour propre* would obviously prevent such a suggestion from being carried "from within."

Yet the financial situation at the present moment is

exceedingly serious. The millionaires of England have been appealed to in the most solemn way to imitate the Americans by giving to the University, but in face of the unanswered charge that there is plenty of money at Oxford if it were properly distributed not more than a third of what Lord Curzon asked for has as yet been given. There is nothing unprecedented and revolutionary in the demand for a Commission. Every year, the Charity Commissioners in the past, and the Board of Education as their successors, have had to inquire into educational trusts. In every case the reason is the same—the trustees are not fully representative, and have let their interests or their prejudices, directly or insensibly, sway their judgment. And the cure also is always the same—an inquiry, on which public interests are duly represented, and in which the mere fact of publicity shows things in their true proportions, followed by a scheme which prevents the occurrence of like evils in the future. Oxford is larger and more august than the scores of grammar-schools and colleges which have been usefully reconstructed in the past, and for that reason only reformers ask that the inquiry should be carried out by a Royal Commission rather than by a single official representative of the Board of Education. The fact, however, that the task is large and complicated, and the interests concerned important to the nation, is only an additional reason why the Government should create the necessary machinery of inquiry without further delay.\*

\* This article was written at the time of the discussions on the reform of the older universities aroused by Bishop Gore's question in the House of Lords, and a year before the publication of Lord Curzon's *Principles and Methods of University Reform*, which opposed the setting up of a Royal Commission and suggested a scheme of "reform from within."

The then Warden of Wadham (the late Dr. Wright Henderson) replied in a letter published in the *Westminster Gazette* for May 19, 1908. In this letter he denies that he "spoke for the majority by any arrangement" in the debate on the question of Greek at Oxford, or that "the majority in Congregation, by their rejection of the proposal, determined or wished to determine, in favour of the 'dolts,' against the young scientists, or historians, or intelligent persons generally." He says that "many of us heartily approved" the proposal to "make knowledge of Greek (in Responsions) mean something better," but that "some were

unable to vote for it, because the acceptance of it would have perpetuated the requirement of Pass Compulsory Greek, which is not real Greek, as a condition of entrance to the University." "The majority," he writes, "wished only to temper the wind for the shorn lamb, the closely shorn lamb who comes from the public schools knowing little of Greek, though often highly educated in other ways; to temper the wind also for other lambs who have not been educated at public schools, or at any good schools; also for young scientists and historians, who can 'get up' the miserable Greek required at present more easily than enough Greek to translate an 'Unseen' passage." In the last paragraph of the Warden's letter, he argues against the exclusion of passmen from the universities, and writes: "Our practical nation will not tolerate a university inhabited only by professors, researchers, and clever boys, all admirable persons; but it takes more than them to make a world; at least to make the Oxford which we know, and which excites the envy as well as the criticism of nations superior to us in learning, science, and research."

Of the changes which have taken place in the organization of Oxford University since 1908, the most important are the following:

A Board of Finance, to advise the University Chest, was created in 1912 (to be followed by the reorganization of the University Chest itself in 1920), and a General Board of Faculties, with the power of initiating legislation on subjects connected with the studies of the University in 1913, both as a result of Lord Curzon's reform movement.

The Royal Commission on the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, appointed in 1919, reported in 1922, and the Commission of 1923 embodied its recommendations in Statutes which came into force in 1926. Under these Statutes a retiring age was fixed and a scheme of superannuation introduced for all teachers and officers of the University; and the emoluments from open scholarships were divided into a fixed sum of £30 a year, and a "discretionary" amount (maximum £70) to be granted to scholars according to their need of pecuniary assistance. The University received a Government grant which represented in 1928-29 thirty per cent of its total income. (See *The Government of Oxford*, Oxford University Press, 1931, p. 30.) In 1927 the total income of the twenty colleges mentioned in the annual returns published by the University Chest was still "nearly double that of the corporate University" (*Ibid.* p. 31), and college contributions to the University represented only fourteen per cent of the University's income. Greek and Latin were made alternative subjects in Responsions in 1920.

The number of passmen has greatly decreased since 1908; and there has been a proportionate increase in the number of undergraduates from schools other than the great public schools. (Ed.)

## THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH EDUCATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE PAST (1908)\*

THE ENGLISH EDUCATIONAL STRUGGLE of the last hundred years, when it is followed in the lives of its indomitable organizers, presents itself as a single campaign in which the issues were clear from the beginning, the forces on each side practically the same throughout, and the result a steady though still incomplete advance from one conquered position to another. At the beginning, the Church claimed, though she did not enforce, that monopoly of all education which was given her by the Act of Uniformity. Undenominational schools were few, ill-supported, and suspect. As the years went on undenominational education secured, first an appreciable share of the school supply, then aid from the central and local revenue, and finally a predominant position in the whole system. Decade by decade the historian of education can watch the slow increase of the type of school which bore the successive names of "British," "Board," and "Provided," until this year it represents three-fifths of the whole elementary accommodation. The same process may be followed in the supply of training colleges, of secondary schools, and of university education. One can imagine, indeed, one of the old heroes of Borough Road, pointing to the statistical curves in the Board of Education Blue Book, and saying, "If you, our successors, fight as well as we did,

\* First published as an appendix to H. B. Binns's *A Century of Education, 1808-1908. The Centenary History of the British and Foreign School Society* (Dent, 1908). (Ed.)

It was in this same year (1908) that Graham Wallas became a member of the Education Committee of the London County Council, after being Chairman of the School Management Committee of the old School Board from 1897 to 1904. (Ed.)

these lines will continue to rise. If you show yourselves weak or neglectful, they will stand still or sink."

But this simple conception of a conflict between denominationalism and undenominationalism becomes more complicated as soon as one begins to look at the educational struggle of the past in its relation to the general history of England. Again and again the rival forces represented by the "National" and "British" schools came to a deadlock, and after each deadlock, progress was made possible, not by any increase of determination or skill in the leaders of educational parties, but by changes in the general structure of English life, arising out of movements and forces having little or no conscious connection with education.

The *Edinburgh Review*, in 1833, referred to the failure of Brougham's Education Bill in 1820, and said, "Since the last signal defeat of the friends of national education in Parliament, twelve years or more have elapsed during which the subject has been scarcely alluded to." In the year that this was written, the first Parliamentary grant for education was voted, and the cause which made it possible was not the activity of educationalists but the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832. Cobden, in 1851, said that for fifteen years he had tried to induce the religious bodies to take up education, and that he had "at last taken refuge in the secular system."\* Sir James Kay Shuttleworth, referring to the same period, described, in 1859, his abandonment of hope from anything but a denominational solution. "I was led," he says, "to admit, what was very reluctantly forced on my mind, the weakness of any other principle [than religion] . . . I believe that no civil body in this country apart from the Central Government has done anything worth speaking of for public education."† Cobden and Shuttleworth were two of the shrewdest men in England; and while Cobden stated that nothing was to be hoped from the religious bodies, Shuttleworth was equally sure that nothing was to be hoped from the civil bodies. Both were apparently right in 1859, and

\* Cobden's *Speeches*, p. 568.

† *Newcastle Commission on Education* (1859), Vol. VI, p. 305.

yet in 1870, because the Reform Bill of 1867 had meanwhile passed, an Education Bill creating local authorities was not only possible but inevitable.

In the same way Matthew Arnold and Huxley raged in vain for a quarter of a century at the indifference of the English people to the need of secondary and technical education. But in 1888 the House of Commons clamoured for such education, because the Germans, who certainly were not thinking of the desirability of improving English schools, had used the indemnity which they received after their war with France to make themselves serious rivals of England in the trade of the world.

Whoever, therefore, wishes to forecast the future of English education during the present century must consider first, not the educational problem as it is, but the tendencies which may change its conditions.

The most important of those tendencies is, it seems to me, the steady growth of the size of English towns, and of the proportion of the English population living in them. In 1850, half the English people were urban, in 1900 more than three-quarters, and the process is still going on. The educational problem of the future is therefore, to borrow the title of Mr. R. A. Bray's eloquent book, the problem of the *Town Child*.\* The town child lives in an artificial environment; that is to say, he never sees or hears anything all day long, except the strip of blue sky on a fine morning or the note of a caged bird, which has not been given its form and colour and sound by the act of man. Sometimes his environment is the unintended result of things done by his elders without reference to their effect on him. No one, for instance, ever chose for the predominant colour of the London landscape as the London child sees it that peculiar tint which a yellow stock-brick acquires when it has been exposed for a few years to London smoke. Nor did anyone ever decide that it was good for an East End child that his ears should throb all day and half the night with the sound of iron-shod wheels on granite setts.

\* R. A. Bray, *The Town Child* (1907). (ED.)

But to an increasing extent the environment of the town child is now not only artificial but intended. The width and direction of the street in which he lives, the trams, open spaces, policemen, free libraries, are all deliberately made what they are for the sake of their effect on him, either as he is now or as he will be when he grows up. The effect of these things is therefore as truly part of his publicly provided education as are the lessons which he receives in school; and, now that in the large towns, at least, the provision of education is part of the general municipal administration, that fact will tend, I believe, to be more and more clearly recognized. When the town park-keeper now trains a boy to admire flowers without picking them, or the medical officer of health puts up a notice warning him not to eat unripe fruit, or the policeman prevents him, under Mr. Samuel's Bill, from smoking "substitutes professing to take the place of tobacco," they are in the most literal and exact sense taking part in his education. In the same way the habits taught in the schools are beginning to be thought of as part of the health and police administration of the towns. As the system of medical inspection of school children develops, the town authorities in any district where the infant death-rate is excessive will first inquire whether the girls of their town leave school physically and mentally fit for the duties of motherhood. Some of the most important educational decisions of the future will perhaps be those which result from the fact that a town is turning from a manufacturing to a trading centre, or that its chief industry is failing and must either be stimulated or abandoned.

This sense of the unity and interdependence of public services under urban conditions will, one hopes, do much to cure that vice of educational thought which treats the expedients and even the names of the existing school organization as eternal and sacred entities. In the early days of Bell and Lancaster popular education meant to more than half its supporters the method of teaching by child monitors. He who attacked the monitorial system, attacked education itself. Mr. Mozley wrote of the Church school managers in

1845, "They have been so long in the shackles of the existing system, and it has so far identified itself with their idea of an elementary school, that they find the utmost difficulty in separating themselves from it."\* Mozley's *Report* introduced the pupil-teacher system, and we are only just emerging from a period in which it seemed as necessary that a teacher should have been a pupil-teacher as that a butterfly should have been a caterpillar. The name "School Board" and the expedient of *ad hoc* election identified itself still later with the idea of public educational control, and the abolition of school boards in 1902 seemed to many good Liberals as great a crime as would have been the burning of every board school. Perhaps the members and officials of town councils in the future, because they will have to think of the child population and its needs as a whole, will be able to rid themselves of the feeling that there is a necessary and eternal gulf between "elementary" and "secondary" or "technical" education, and even the "secondary" school master may gradually lose his rooted belief that the fact that any subject or method is successful in his own school is sufficient reason why it should be excluded from the "elementary" school.

The second process which will, I believe, tend to transform in the coming century the conditions of the educational problem, is the growth of positive knowledge, and the consequently increasing authority of "science." Science is already, in a somewhat confused way, influencing educational method. Books on child psychology are ceasing to be mere collections of traditional maxims and ingenious guesses. Everyone feels that a student of psychology who has never been in a school since his schooldays may to-morrow make, in a laboratory full of brass instruments, a discovery which will lead to a revolution in all our teaching. Already the really keen fights on the London Education Committee are started, not so much by religion and school provision, as by questions of "motor-sensory" or "heuristic" teaching.

And the growth of science will influence not only methods

\* *Report on Midland Schools* (H.C. 1845, xxxii).

of teaching, but the choice of subjects to be taught. The older type of university education is dissolving before our eyes. The classical education of the secondary schools has before it the alternative of being absorbed into a general study of the history of civilization or of disappearing entirely. Even the blameless ghost of Mr. Cowper-Temple, if he could spend a day in the British Museum looking, now at the relics of stonemen and lake dwellers, and now at those inscriptions of Mesopotamian and Egyptian kings which reveal organized imperial governments earlier than Archbishop Ussher's date for the creation of the world, might feel that his solution of the religious difficulty has to adjust itself to a new and wider atmosphere. The whole religious controversy may indeed find itself caught up and enlarged by a controversy on the "proper study of mankind" as keen as the mediaeval conflict between humanism and scholasticism.

To some minds it appears obvious that our new scientific knowledge should be presented to the child mainly in the form of direct sensory experience, made more definite by actual measuring and weighing, and intended to stimulate and satisfy his spontaneous curiosity while it trains his fingers and his senses; and that this experience should lead up to the life of the skilled mechanic or overseer, or in cases of unusual ability and devotion, to that of the scientific inquirer. To others, the interpretation rather than the bare observation of the universe seems the most essential thing in education. The town child, they feel, if he is to see any meaning in his environment, must learn that meaning less from his own weighing and measuring and touching than from books which record the experiences and achievements of mankind. He must, they believe, if he is to be educated in any real sense of the term, draw, in however simple a form, from history, literature, and even, if the sense of beauty returns to us, from art, those deeper things of the spirit which are not to be found in test tubes and balances or on the manual training bench.

Future historians of our epoch may lightly decide that both these parties were right, because both elements are

required in any true education; but the question has to be settled now by the drawing up of actual time-tables, and it is not likely that an agreement which will represent the best combination of the two elements will be easily reached. And both parties have also to face the intolerable difficulty of deciding whether they are preparing the town child for a life like that which he sees around him or for something better; and whether, in allocating the disputed half-hours of the curriculum, it is more important that the son of a London labourer should be fitted to conceive and help to bring about a nobler London, or to earn higher wages at his father's trade, when higher wages may mean, as things are now, the only possibility for him of a civilized life.

A third social tendency, which is certain to exercise a marked influence on the future of education, is the claim now put forward by the workers in every organized occupation, whether it is a trade or a profession, to a larger share in the direction of their own work—a claim which will be asserted in the future with growing insistence both against the private and the public employer.

At this point, indeed, we are faced with an ancient difficulty in social structure. What is to be the relation between the organizations which represent the inhabitants of any city or district as craftsmen and producers, and those which represent them as citizens and consumers? In the mediaeval city the independence and internal discipline of the crafts made possible the splendid achievements of Florence and Bruges. But the craft guilds at the moment of their greatest efficiency fought in the streets against the merchant guilds or the common councils; and the failure of the cities to preserve their freedom under the new conditions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, or to adapt themselves to the industrial changes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was due in large part to that want of civic cohesion which was the result of these conflicts.

The whole problem was, it is true, forgotten in the social and intellectual confusion of the generations preceding our own. In England, for instance, we left, we did not know why

law and medicine to organize themselves with a dangerous, because unnoticed and undirected, completeness, while all the other arts remained unorganized except by spasmodic trade unions of working men or rings of employers. Now, however, the enormous necessities of our urban life are again bringing home to us the need of a conscious purpose in our work larger than that of the individual worker, and the question of the relation between producer and consumer is reappearing in something like its old form among a generation which has forgotten the experience of the past. We all agree, for instance, that, in education, the doctrine of "supply and demand," with its refusal to provide for any responsible organization at all, is no longer possible. No one desires that middle-class education in London shall be left to those "schools for the sons of gentlemen" which advertise themselves along the Brixton Road. But we are not agreed as to the proportion in which responsibility should be shared in any new system by the organizations of consumers and those of producers. No one, except a few purists in the Social Democratic Federation, believes that the intellectual direction of a highly developed society can be founded on a voting nexus only, or that the sole initiative of all our collective administration can be divided between the members of Parliament and the committees of town councils. We therefore talk vaguely of teaching as a "profession," and Parliament every session creates or destroys a teachers' register to be controlled by representatives of the teachers themselves, and consisting, according to the whim of the moment, of separate or amalgamated columns for elementary and secondary schools. But no one has seriously asked what rights are to be given either to the individual registered teacher or to the professional body.

As far, indeed, as English education is concerned, the whole question of the relation of the teacher to his work is settled chiefly by the accidents of history. Those forms of education which during the first half of the nineteenth century were supported by ancient endowments, the universities, that is to say, and the public schools, are controlled

almost entirely by the teachers, while those forms of education which were provided during the second half of the nineteenth century by public grants or maintenance are for the most part actually governed by non-teaching amateurs, who are either members of elected bodies or are nominated by such bodies. The "non-provided" elementary school represents a still older type in which the school is controlled by the clergyman who, though he is a professional in regard to his own work, is an amateur in his relation to the teacher.

This distinction between the comparative independence of a university professor or a public school head master and the real subordination of the teacher in a public elementary school or even in a municipal school or college of whatever grade, corresponds, of course, to the fact that on the whole the independent teachers are teaching more difficult subjects to older students. But the correspondence is very rough. The head, for instance, of a municipal training college is obviously doing much more advanced work than the head of a small endowed grammar school in a country town. If the distinction is to be justified by differences of higher and lower in education, it will have to be very largely modified. Greater freedom will have to be given to the teachers in the new institutions, and some of those in the old institutions will have to lose part of their existing freedom.

It has always seemed to me that the associations of the word "manager" have had a good deal of effect in emphasizing and preserving this distinction. As a matter of historical fact the elementary schools of the country were originally built for philanthropic or denominational reasons by clergymen or committees who themselves subscribed or collected every year the money for the salary of the teacher whom they appointed, controlled, and dismissed. The late Bishop Fraser once described the result as he used to see it when he was an inspector of schools. He said that one morning he asked his clerical host who was the intelligent-looking young man who had brought him his boots. "Oh," said the rector, "that was my schoolmaster." Robert Lowe strengthened this tradition by his New Code of 1861. He was a devout

political economist of the most rigid Middle Victorian type, and therefore, just as the early English rulers of Bengal asked in each village who was the "landlord," with a conviction that a landlord must exist everywhere, so Lowe approached the question of elementary education by asking who was the "employer." He decided that the manager of a school was the employer in the fullest sense of the term of all the teachers in the school, and thenceforward all Government grants were paid to managers and all responsibility, as far as the State was concerned, was attached to them only.

The first members of school boards were men and women trained in the management of voluntary schools. They found themselves still called the managers of their schools in the Government Code, and they looked on themselves as the thinking *entrepreneurs* in a business in which the teachers were the executive hands. The tremendous influence of English social tradition helped to make this assumption easier. The early voluntary managers and members of school boards were "gentlemen and ladies." The teachers were not; nearly all of them had indeed spent the whole of their lives whether as pupils, pupil-teachers, or teachers in elementary schools and diocesan training colleges saturated with the feudal manners of the English village, and providing few opportunities of genuine intellectual stimulus.

But the educational equipment of the elementary teacher improved at the same time as it was discovered that the school boards, whether in town or village, were not wholly composed of men whose culture and social position raised them above the possibility of criticism. This change did not at first make much difference in the conception of their own position held by the school board members. The farmers on the village boards still looked on the schoolmaster as a particular kind of labourer, and the tradesman on a town board still looked on the teachers as his social and intellectual inferiors. It made, however, a great difference in the attitude of the younger and more vigorous teachers. Perhaps, indeed, the most important of the many important effects of the Borough Road Training College on English education has

been the influence of its freer atmosphere on the minds of a number of able young teachers, who utterly rejected the identification of the board member or the curate with "the squire and his relations" in the village prayer. If they were to be treated as "hands" they could at least form a trade union, and the National Union of Teachers showed the average clergyman or chairman of a school board, to his extreme annoyance, that he had to deal with the officials of a great organization who could pillory him in their newspaper, boycott his school, and bring effective political pressure to bear upon Vice-Presidents of Council.

Meanwhile certain elementary schools evolved into higher grade schools and schools of science, while others became pupil-teacher centres; and the larger town boards appointed some of the ablest of the head teachers as board inspectors. Then the Act of 1902 again changed the position. The ordinary member of a town council brought to his new educational work not the tradition of the school manager, but that of the administrative municipal committee accustomed to act on expert official advice. The teachers both in the higher and elementary municipal schools had therefore to deal henceforth with professional officers whose own relation to their committees was rather that of the chief technical expert in a joint stock business to his directors than that of a "hand" to his "employer." Under the new system the municipal teacher does therefore in part gain that which the teacher in those endowed schools, which are now coming under some measure of municipal control, loses in independence, and already the "Local Managers," whom the Act of 1902 insisted on endowing with a statutory existence, complain that it is difficult for them to form an intelligible idea of their position in the new administrative system.

This tendency towards a more equal distribution both of discipline and self-respect among the teachers in different types of schools is not likely to stop at the exact stage which it has now reached. A generation hence the heads of Oxford and Cambridge Colleges may be lamenting the fact that they are liable to dismissal unless they perform a definite

ist of duties to the satisfaction of someone else, while the youngest teacher in an elementary girls' school may feel that she belongs to a profession which will not only ensure her fair treatment, but will stimulate her work by a conscious connection with the traditions of a great and progressive art.

Yet the closer organization of the teaching profession, however much it may improve the position of the teacher, will undoubtedly increase both the complexity and the difficulty of educational administration. It is easy to say that the elected representative should direct the purpose of education, and that the expert teacher and official should contrive the method by which that purpose may be carried out. But in education purpose and method are closely intermingled, and the representative, however conscious he may be of his own ignorance, will always fear to leave the ultimate decision even on method to men and women who may be half consciously biased in favour of their own teaching habits and of the subjects which they learnt during their student years. The problem is, nevertheless, here upon us, and it may be that in the schools and universities a practical compromise between the will and needs of the consumer and the knowledge and interests of the producer will have been successfully brought about a generation before the question is even consciously faced in the factory and the mine.

At this point, however, that old member of the Lancastrian or British and Foreign Committee (James Mill, perhaps, or William Allen), whose point of view I tried to give at the beginning, might break into the argument and say, "Yes, your problems of city environment, and the growth of science, and the difficulties of professional and political organization are all important, more important than we perhaps expected. But our difficulties are still there, in the 'single-school' districts monopolized by denominational management, and the exclusive training colleges almost entirely supported by public funds. Nor will they be settled without a good deal of hard fighting as well as hard thinking." And one could only answer, "That, after all, is true."

## THE UNIVERSITIES AND THE NATION IN AMERICA AND ENGLAND (1914)\*

I SPENT SOME MONTHS in the United States in 1896 and 1910, and have just returned from a third stay there. My work kept me at each visit to the same group of Eastern cities, and I spent my time in the same way, in lecturing about English institutions, and in talking with my hosts and colleagues about American institutions. So narrow and localized an experience gives me no right even to attempt an estimate of the general intellectual life of the American continent, or any general comparison of America with other nations. But just because I visited on each occasion the same places under almost the same conditions, I have been, I think, in a position to observe any important changes that have there taken place, and to compare, with some chance of truth, one section, at any rate, of American life in 1914 with the same section in 1896 and 1910.

What has chiefly struck me, as a result of that comparison, is an apparent growth in the United States of the authority of methodical and specially instructed thought on social and political questions, as against average unspecialized opinion. My friends did not emphasize in 1914, as they did in 1896, the American distrust of the "college-bred" man, and trust in the "plain citizen." Nor was expert knowledge assumed, during my last visit, to be in constant danger of being "steam-rollered" by a well-organized political campaign. In 1896, for instance, Mr. Bryan stood as Democratic candidate, on a currency platform, for the Presidency. If he had been elected, and if the Democratic Party had controlled Congress, a Currency Bill would certainly have been passed,

\* First published in the *Contemporary Review*, June, 1914. (Ed.)

which would have been in accordance with the average opinion of the voters in Colorado and Arkansas, but which would have been contemptuously and hopelessly opposed by the overwhelming mass of expert Eastern authority. In 1912 Mr. Wilson was elected as a Democrat; and in 1913 he carried through Congress a Currency Bill drafted and amended in accordance with high expert advice. His Bill was, as far as I could judge, accepted by the whole of the complex interests concerned as a manifest improvement in the financial system of the nation. This seemed to me to be due, not merely to the personal difference between Mr. Bryan and Mr. Wilson, though that was a significant fact, but in large part to a shifting of the intellectual centre of gravity from uninstructed opinion to instructed thought.

I seemed to detect the same tendency in the federal attempts to control the trusts and railways, both by legislation and administration, and in the experiments which were being tried by the States, in such questions as Employers' Liability or Wages Boards, and by the cities in the formation of new charters. The present experiments may be wise or unwise, but they are being carried out in a new atmosphere of expert advice and criticism; and the administrative expert is often employed and respected even in cities where the politician who appoints him may be ignorant or corrupt.\*

This change is, of course, largely due to wide intellectual and social causes, influencing not only America, but the whole civilized world. During the last twenty years the world-wide transition from rural to urban life, and from agriculture to industry, has become more marked; and in consequence the prestige of the "Science" without which a modern city cannot exist has been greatly increased. In America, indeed, the spirit and authority of Science is rapidly

\* Since 1914 this tendency has grown and become more significant in the United States. It is apparent in the phrase "the Brain Trust," used of Franklin Roosevelt's administration; and in the grouping of highly trained experts in the various research bureaus closely connected with Federal, State and Local Administration; in the establishment of planning Commissions, and the improvement of the Civil Services. (Ed.)

spreading from urban industry to rural agriculture. The Churches again have everywhere been influenced by new knowledge as to the development both of man and of religion; though the popular American Protestantism, where the plain man used to seek individual guidance from his open Bible, has been more deeply affected than any other form of religious thought. All over the world new medical and psychological knowledge is making men and women realize that diseases which have hitherto been taken for granted or kept out of sight are, in fact, preventable, and that the mind itself can be made the subject of methodical study leading to foreseen results. In America, however, the prestige of physiology and psychology seems greater than in Europe. In particular, the pedagogic psychology of the normal schools and teachers' conferences, at which Mr. William James used to smile, is becoming more serious and authoritative under the leadership of men like Professor G. Stanley Hall.\* And I noticed during the dinner-table discussion of questions of personal conduct a tendency to use terms like "reaction" (where an Englishman would use "motive" or "character"), which implied a whole background of accepted psychological principles.

But among my friends in the Eastern cities the most important causes of the change of outlook which I am trying to indicate seemed to lie in the special facts of contemporary American social development. I had once to read through a large collection of the private letters, pamphlets, newspaper articles, speeches, etc., which were produced in England by the social and political "reformers" during the years following the battle of Waterloo. Bentham, James Mill, Owen, Cobbett, Hodgskin, Place, Wakefield, Ensor, and the rest, all took it for granted during those years that the distress and pauperism which followed the Peace, the enormous National Debt, the population facts revealed by the censuses of 1801 and 1811, and the undirected growth of the new mechanical industry, constituted a special call for severe intellectual work, and a special responsibility on those

\* See note, p. 146. (Ed.)

who were capable of doing it. Many of my friends in New England, New York, and Washington seemed to recognize a similar special "call" in the colossal growth of immigration from South Eastern Europe, the overcrowding of the new cities, and the insufficiency of the traditions of American Federal Government when faced by new financial and industrial organizations stretching across the whole continent. Others of them seemed to find their "call" in the growing stringency of the present international position of the United States.

Mr. Herbert Croly, in his very able book, *The Promise of American Life*,\* speaks, in a phrase borrowed from Mr. Wells, of this change in outlook as one away from the old belief in national "destiny," to be fulfilled by the providential direction of the purely selfish efforts of the ordinary man to secure his individual interest, and towards a new conception of a national "purpose," to be achieved by the deliberate and organized efforts of those who consciously prefer the national good to their own.

In this change of outlook the Universities appear both as cause and as effect. The modern "elective" system, by which the American student is left almost entirely free to choose his own subjects of study, makes the Universities singularly sensitive to outside intellectual developments. The President of one of the great Eastern Universities showed me the other day an analysis of the courses taken by all his students during the last three years. The old curriculum of Classics and Mathematics had lost its position; Classics, indeed, had almost disappeared. By far the largest body of students were those who had taken Economics as their main study. With those who took "Government" (or, as we should call it, "Political Science"), they made up about a third of the whole, and if one added the students whose main study was American History, Psychology, Social Ethics, or any other attempt at the scientific analysis of modern human problems, they made up about one-half, leaving the other half (if we exclude purely technical courses from the calculation) to be

\* New York, 1909. (Ed.)

divided between Mathematics, the Natural Sciences, and the languages, literature, and art of the whole world. The facts, I was told, would be found to be about the same in the other great Universities. It is not easy to give figures showing what this means in terms of the annual output of students trained in such subjects. There are, roughly, 600 "Universities and Colleges" in the United States, with 300,000 students and 30,000 "professors and instructors." Even if we use the term "University" to include for our purposes only one-third of these numbers, it is probably safe to say that something between 6,000 and 10,000 students (of whom four-fifths, perhaps, are men) take the Bachelor's degree annually after a training mainly consisting of Economics, Government, or some other modern sociological course; that something between 500 and 1,000 students annually complete post-graduate courses in the same group of subjects; and that about 4,000 professors and instructors give their whole time to teaching these subjects.\* It would be well within the mark to say that these figures represent at least thirty times the corresponding figures in the United Kingdom.

When I discussed these facts with my Eastern friends, I was sometimes warned not to exaggerate their importance. "Economics," I was told, often appeals to the average philistine parent as a "practical" subject, a means of increasing the individual money-making power of his son. Lectures on Economics, though no longer "abstract," are, they said, often "popular." An Eastern professor told me that the claim made, on very strong evidence, by certain Western State Universities, that they provide the whole intellectual direction for the legislative and executive policy of their respective States, might mean rather that the spirit of politics had entered the class-room than that the spirit of the class-room had entered politics. More significant is the fact that, as far as I could judge, the vast quantity of teaching and learning

\* This tendency has also developed since 1914. The "Universities and Colleges" have now (1939) about one and a half million students, and perhaps an even larger proportion than before take courses in "Government." (ED.)

which is devoted to the social sciences, has not yet produced a proportionate output of first-rate books. Almost all American professors deliver, according to our European standard, too many lectures, and may, for that reason, find it difficult to give enough time for constructive thought. Throughout America, also, the strong influences both of German University traditions, and of the methods borrowed from the natural sciences, require "original research" from the youngest post-graduate student, and encourage him rather to write at once a thesis suitable for one of their admirable technical quarterly reviews, or for a series of University monographs, than to begin to collect ideas and facts which may result ten years later in a new social analysis or social invention. And in spite of the charge that certain professors are too political, an Englishman is sometimes conscious that American *Lehrfreiheit* in social questions is not quite so complete as in some European Universities.

But when one has said everything by way of doubt and reservation, the fact of the unprecedented volume of specialized social knowledge that is annually created in the United States still remains. These University facts are, of course, still comparatively new; and a change in the direction of University studies does not show its full effect in the intellectual life of a nation for at least thirty years after its occurrence. But one can already detect the influence of the University sociological courses on the *personnel* of American political and social administration. From the time of the Revolution onwards the overwhelming majority of American State and Federal representatives and officials have been lawyers. In the Federal Senate and House of Representatives lawyers still are found in something like their old dominance. But the younger lawyers have now often taken a University course of Economics or "Government" before going to a post-graduate law school, and among the younger administrative officials employed both by the Federal and the State or Municipal governments, one finds many men who have no other profession than that of sociological teacher, or writer, or administrator.

To an Englishman the most remarkable fact about these younger men is that so few of them hold, or seem to desire to hold, established and life-long posts. A man of recognized ability and force may, after his University degree, travel for a year in Europe with a University scholarship. He may come back to be an "assistant" or "lecturer" in some University, or a paid member of the staff of a "settlement," or secretary of some Municipal or State "Commission." Later on he may become a full University professor, or one of the officials of a bank or insurance company, or may hold an important administrative post at Washington. But he is no more certain what will be his next piece of work than a skilled doctor is certain who will be his next patient; and the uncertainty seems to trouble him no more than it does the doctor. I was allowed to take part a few years ago in a discussion between the Civil Service Commissioners and the Executive of the Civil Service Reform Association in a New England State. In the course of the discussion I argued in favour of a "first-class" permanent Federal and State Civil Service of the English type. The most important man among my hosts argued against it, on the ground that it would shut off from the ablest of those who were appointed the prospect of a varied and interesting career. "On the door that leads to such a service," he said, "should be written, 'All hope abandon, ye who enter here.'"

Now, for the last two years I have been a member of that Royal Commission which issued a month ago its report on the British Home Civil Service;\* and although my American observations were not relevant to the immediate problems with which we were mainly engaged, I found myself, at the meetings of the Royal Commission, sometimes wondering whether we have anything to learn from the line of development which is apparently being taken by the scientific element in America administration. For the recruitment of our highest permanent officials we still trust in the main to the scheme worked out by Sir Charles Trevelyan, in accordance with the ideas of Lord Macaulay. We aim, that is to say, at

\* See note, p. 127. (Ed.)

choosing the ablest and most industrious young men out of the annual University crop from every field of learning. In theory, at least, we are quite indifferent as to the particular studies in which they have shown excellence. We believe, as Macaulay said in 1833,\* that if Oxford men learnt the Cherokee instead of the Greek language, "the man who understood the Cherokee best, who made the most correct and melodious Cherokee verses, who comprehended most accurately the effect of the Cherokee particles, would generally be a superior man to him who was destitute of these accomplishments." When we get an able young man, and we do get quite astonishingly able young men, we expect them to acquire the special knowledge necessary for their administrative work by doing that work. But may not, I have wondered, the growing complexity of modern social organization and the growing mass of special sociological knowledge make this process somewhat dangerous? The able first-class clerk, even although he does his official work conscientiously, may develop his main intellectual interests quite apart from that work. He may become a leading authority on psychical research, or sixteenth-century music; and during the working day may remain a gifted amateur, whom experience and habit slowly turn into a narrow and nervous routineer. A careful inspection of the papers and results of the "Class I" competition shows, indeed, that the Commissioners at Burlington House are even now influenced by an apprehension of that danger. Cambridge mathematics are too powerful a vested interest to be treated on any terms but equality with other studies. But a man who has been trained in a chemical laboratory is not, in fact, now given an equal chance with an equally able man who has taken Oxford Greats. "Greats," it is rightly felt, is the better training for an administrative official. But when once this principle of preference for specially suitable studies is admitted, it must go further than we have allowed it to go. Greats and Modern History, for instance, are an obviously better course than Greats and

\* In the speech on the East India Company, *Speeches* (1853 edition), Vol. I, p. 186. (Ed.)

Classical Moderations, though the man who takes it stands a very much worse chance. But the "Mods" tutors, backed by the clergy in Convocation, are a more formidable vested interest at Oxford than even the mathematicians at Cambridge.

And we are also beginning to be influenced by the belief in the educational value of varied sociological experience which carries so much weight in America. Not only does that belief largely control administrative appointments in our Municipal service, but a good many of our high Whitehall officials have, in fact, entered the service at an age considerably later than the Class I maximum of twenty-four, and have been originally chosen for their special sociological experience as well as their success in sociological study. The present Permanent Head, for instance, of the Board of Trade prepared himself for his work very much in the American manner.\* After graduating at Oxford, he became successively an extension lecturer, the secretary of an educational society, the secretary of a Royal Commission, and a Board of Trade official. He only differed from the typical American trained administrator in being finally offered and accepting a life-long career in the Government service.

On which lines are we likely to develop in the future, nearer to America or "back to Macaulay"? If we ignore mere vested interests and the traditional claims of the English "governing class," and ask only which line of development is most likely to lead to the permanent good of the nation, our answer to this question will depend upon our answer to another question: "Is there, in fact, either in England or America, a science of government?" There is obviously, for instance, a science of medicine. If we want a doctor in the Government service, we do not offer the post to the ablest young man we can find, after an examination in any subject, whether Cherokee or quaternions, that he may choose, and then trust that he will pick up his medical knowledge while sitting at a desk and writing prescriptions. We require in his case special study and special experience. The lawyers have

\* Sir Hubert Llewellyn Smith. (Ed.)

forced us to recognize (in spite, perhaps, of a good deal of private scepticism) the existence of a science of Law, and even the identification of it with the subjects in which the Inns of Court hold examinations. But more than half the intelligent educated Englishmen at this moment would sturdily deny that a science of government exists at all, or that a young man starts with any advantage in administration by knowing the "law of rent," or by being able to answer questions about Locke and Bentham. I myself, if I had to decide the matter, should, I think, take a middle position. There are certain subjects, Recent History for instance—both political and economic—Jurisprudence, Comparative Legislation, and Statistics, which are of direct daily use to an administrative official, and which have already been developed far beyond the point which the ablest young man is likely to reach by picking up knowledge in his day's work. There are certain other subjects, of which, perhaps, psychology is the most important, which, at this moment, offer splendid vistas of sociological thought, and a real knowledge of which may give an able and cool-headed official just that imaginative range which will make him a genuine originator. In choosing, however, subjects for competitive examination, the State is in the old dilemma as to whether one should learn to swim before entering the water, or enter the water before learning to swim. It will be useless to offer examinations in these subjects unless really able young men and women are, in fact, taught them, and able young men and women will not be taught them unless they "pay" in examinations. The State should, therefore, like the practical teacher of swimming, arrange that the depth of the water and the knowledge of swimming should both increase together. If the State gradually increases the tendency to make the subjects which pay in administration pay in examinations, the able students and teachers will gradually take them up.\*

\* For the eleven years 1925-35, Classics supplied thirty-five out of every hundred entrants to the Administrative Grade (the old "Class I"), History twenty-five, Modern Languages eight, Economics and Politics seven, Mathematics six, Languages and Literature seven. In 1937 the

There still remains the question of "outside experience." Should the British, like the American nation, employ its experts by the piece, taking them after they have made their mark in the outside world, and returning them to the outside world after the particular task or period for which they are engaged is finished? My own answer would be that the American tradition seems in this matter, as in some others, not to allow sufficiently for the length of Art and the shortness of Life. A larger proportion than at present of English officials should, I think, enter the public service (with due precautions against favouritism) after practical experience outside it. But the thirty or forty years of an official career are none too long for the formation of a mind; and when an official has once been recruited, I should thenceforward aim at giving him experience and training rather by widening and varying his official work, than by sending him back to the "open market."

marks for the various subjects in the Administrative Class examination were amended by the Civil Service Commissioners to offer a slightly greater weight to Political Science and Economics. It was expected that this would attract and recruit more young men and women taking "Modern Greats" at Oxford, or the equivalent studies elsewhere. It seems as though this expectation will be realized. In general, there has been, since 1914, an increase in the proportion of entrants who have taken History and Economics and Politics. (Ed.)

## MENTAL TRAINING AND THE WORLD CRISIS (1924)

I FIND MYSELF, from time to time, comparing the present position of the world with that of fifteen hundred years ago. Fifteen hundred years ago ancient civilization was visibly falling in ruins. Alaric had just sacked Rome: Attila was a boy of seventeen, dreaming of still worse disasters that he was to inflict upon the Western world; the Vandals were pressing towards the destruction of civilization in North Africa. All the structure of government on which the ancient world, as organized by Rome, had depended, had come to an end. Roman law was no longer valid; all the habits, all the loyalties, all the ideals, all the philosophies, all the religions of the ancient world were passing away, and men may have asked themselves at that time: "Is the mind of man sufficiently strong and wise to keep the reconstruction of the world under the control of rational purpose, or must we let the disasters come, and their results slowly work out by a succession of accidents?" There was thought going on, of course, and intense thought, at that time. Augustine in Hippo was just finishing his treatise upon *The City of God*. Cassianus, after a training among the hermits in Egypt, was just founding the first monasteries in the South of France. But they

\*Address delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Association of University Women Teachers, January 8, 1924.

The address was made from brief notes, and reported in the Annual Report of the Association. In the essay as printed in this volume I have made a certain number of omissions and have rewritten some sentences to make the argument clearer.

Much of the material and some of the ideas and suggestions in this address were used by Graham Wallas in working out the theories explained in *The Art of Thought* (1926). (Ed.)

were thinking rather of another world than this, and their very concentration helped this world to accept accident and drift rather than rational purpose as the form of its future evolution. We know the disastrous results that persisted for a thousand years.

In 1923 a problem, I think of more than equal magnitude, is before us. The modern world—the world that slowly and painfully created itself upon fragments of the Roman civilization—the world based upon understandings between great independent, self-governing States—that world is falling in ruins. No one knows what is government in China; no one knows what will be government a year hence in Russia, or Germany, or Italy, or Spain. Across the great Eurasian continent, from the Pacific, on the East, to the Atlantic, on the West, the old system has fallen in ruins, and the danger we have to face is greater and more intense than the danger at the fall of the ancient civilization. In the first place our social problem is infinitely more complex. Where there were a few cultivators in the clearings of the woods, or a few wandering shepherds out in the plains, now there are millions and millions of industrialized and concentrated factory workers. The very existence of the present population of the Eurasian continent depends upon organization, and to substitute accident and drift and confusion for organization means to reduce our population to something like what it was at the fall of the ancient world. It means the multiplying by hundreds of the horrors which some of us saw in Dr. Nansen's photographs when he came back the other day from Russia.

And we have the further difficulty that the very organization which has produced this vast population has piled up, and is piling up, an extraordinary mass of new knowledge about the world and about man which we find almost impossible, without the severest efforts, to bring into any co-ordinated system.

In that situation—and I believe that future historians will say that we do well to be appalled by the prospect immediately before us—we should probably all agree that mankind requires creative thought, new thought, new

applications of new knowledge, if we are to prevent immediate and further disasters.

Men, of course, differ from other animals in the fact that they can make direct and conscious efforts to produce the results that they desire, and that they can distinguish between those direct and conscious efforts and mere automatic impulse. We have no direct knowledge of the psychology of animals, but one supposes that to an animal, impulse and effort are the same thing; that if the dog feels an impulse to bark, he barks; if he feels an impulse to chase, he chases, an impulse to dig, he digs, and that there is no distinction between the casual and automatic impulse and the thought-out, deliberate and conscious purpose. But the whole of civilization since the Stone Ages has depended upon man's discovery that he can say to himself, "I will try and I will do."

I do not know whether anyone here has read Professor F. Woods Jones's book on *Arboreal Man*,\* in which he points out how much man has owed to the fact that he has hands which are constantly free and at his disposal, and that the mere feeling that he intends to do something with his hands produces almost at once the movement of his hand under his complete control. We have the same kind of complete control over our eyes. The mere fact that we want to look in a certain direction, that we want to focus our eyes in a certain direction, is followed with complete ease by the looking and the focussing.

We have the same power over our attention. We can attend, if we make the effort, to anything that we desire, and therefore we can secure, with something like certainty, those mental processes which follow easily, and almost automatically, on the process of attention. We can, for instance, learn by heart. We can say to ourselves that we will sit down and learn these nonsense syllables or this poetry, by repeating it over and over again. We can remember by the effort of attention. The simpler forms of understanding are again the obvious result of the process of directing attention. If you get a simple proposition in Euclid, and force yourself to read

\* London, 1916. (Ed.)

it over and over again, and to attend to it, you are pretty certain to understand it.

But there are a number of other processes over which we have not the same direct control by effort. We cannot say, "My heart shall beat faster; my digestion shall be better." We have very little control, even, upon our emotions. We can say, "I will love so-and-so"; we may do our best, but there is a haunting doubt whether we shall love him.

The process of new thought is of that second type. We cannot be sure that we will bring it about by an effort of the will, under however high a moral conception that effort may be formed. That has been said again and again, perhaps never more clearly than by Shelley in the wonderful psychological treatise which he called *The Defence of Poetry*. He says: "A man cannot say, 'I will compose poetry.' The greatest poet even cannot say it, for the mind in creation is as a fading coal which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness; this power arises from within, like the colour of a flower which fades and changes as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our nature are unprophetic either of its approach or its departure."

For that reason, men are constantly despairing of securing, merely because they desire it, any result from so automatic and so inconstant a process. Professor Pillsbury, for instance, said the other day that "No rules can be given for changing the unfertile brain into the fertile, nor for the better use of the fertile. Persistence is the only virtue; the rest is very largely a matter of chance."\* Plato thought that poetry came by a process that seemed to him to stand apart from the whole moral life of man, a process which he called madness. He says, "He who, having no touch of the muse's madness in his soul, comes to the door of the temple, and thinks that he will get into it by the help of art, he I say, and his poetry are not admitted. The sane man is nowhere at all when he enters into rivalry with the madman."

We in this room are all teachers—I have been a teacher

\* W. B. Pillsbury, *The Fundamentals of Psychology* (1923), p. 429.  
See *The Art of Thought*, p. 29. (ED.)

now continuously for forty-two years—and our work as teachers deals almost entirely with the creation of direct effort in a certain number of younger human beings. For that reason, we are almost fatally apt to think that direct effort is all-sufficient, and is the only thing which matters to the person undergoing education. Even so fine and modern an educationist as Sir Michael Sadler said the other day that ninety-nine parts of education are diligent and ordinary routine. That sometimes produces a kind of despair in the conscientious teacher. Sir Walter Raleigh, who, although he was a teacher, was always a great deal more than a teacher, said: "Greatness never comes up in watched places," and schools are watched places. When I was a schoolmaster I used to think it my duty, about once a year, to read through Lamb's *Essay upon The New Schoolmaster*. You remember that he describes, with a good deal of sympathy and understanding, the really conscientious schoolmaster, and the effect upon him of his conscientious work. He says: "One of these professors, upon my complaining that these little sketches of mine were anything but methodical, and that I was unable to make them otherwise, kindly offered to instruct me in the method by which young gentlemen in his seminary were taught to compose English themes."

I was for some years Chairman of the School Management Committee of the School Board for London, and we used to have a sub-committee which was called "The Books and Apparatus Sub-Committee." About once a year somebody who had been a teacher, or who worked closely with the teachers' organizations, used to propose what should get over the difficulty of paying large sums to the writers of histories and other books. They said, "Why should we allow publishers to make their profit for themselves? Why don't we draw up a specification of the history we want, as exact as the specification you draw up when you want a building; get the book written for a definite sum, and ourselves make the profit?" I used to have the greatest difficulty in explaining my theory that good history-writing was not produced by such a direct process of effort.

Ought we, in the presence of a very serious crisis in the history of mankind, to accept that kind of despair? If it is true that by direct effort you cannot get the best new thoughts ought we to give up striving after them? I want to suggest to you this afternoon that while it is true that you cannot, by direct effort, secure great new thoughts, any more than you can write great new poetry, there are certain indirect efforts by which you can make it more likely that the great new thoughts will come into the world.

For this purpose the first essential is that we should endeavour to understand what the production of new thoughts is like. I do not propose to go into this problem at any length; but I would recommend you to get a book by Henri Poincaré, the cousin of the French Prime Minister, which has been admirably translated under the name of *Science and Method*,\* and read a chapter called Mathematical Discovery. He describes in this how he worked hard and conscientiously, set himself questions according to the rules of logic with regard to certain mathematical problems, and how he had gone to the last point which could be reached by direct effort. He describes how he then went away for a term of military service as a reservist, and one day quite suddenly there came to him a revelation of the solution. This connection between the preliminary period of hard thought and the suddenness of the discovery of inspiration has been noticed again and again by all sorts of writers. Plato, for instance, says that "from memory and opinion when we are in a state of rest knowledge is produced."

But Poincaré raises another point. He says there is a subconscious process, during which all sorts of solutions must present themselves, and be subconsciously rejected. Finally there comes a solution suddenly into your mind, with a full conviction that it is right. He asks what chooses that right solution from the others which must have presented themselves, and in an extremely interesting passage declares that

\* Translated by F. Maitland, with a preface by Bertrand Russell, 1914.  
Cf. *The Art of Thought*, Chap IV, for an analysis and criticism of Poincaré's theory. (Ed.)

what chooses is a certain emotional value in the solution. He says that he has found, by taking all the right solutions, and the comparatively few wrong ones, that have come to him in this way, that they have the same quality of appealing to that aesthetic emotion which he calls the feeling of elegance. He says, "It may appear surprising that sensibility [emotion] should be introduced in connection with mathematical demonstrations, which it would seem can only interest the intellect. But not if we bear in mind the feeling of mathematical beauty and the harmony of numbers and forms and geometrical elegance. It is a real aesthetic feeling that all mathematicians recognize, and this is truly sensibility."

The process of thought has always been in human life part of the process of action. It is a part little developed in the history of the pre-human races, and developed very often as a sort of addition to the more automatic processes of the lower nerve centres, but it has always been developed as a way of guiding action. If you watch your own decision to act in any particular crisis, you will find that the struggle is really one between two competing conceptions of action, one of which in the end acquires more vividness and force, while the other slowly fades away. And you will find that what enables the subconscious mind to pick out some particular decision as being what we call the right decision, is, as Poincaré says, some emotional impulse. The emotion may be beauty; it may be the love of one's fellow-men; it may be the craftsman's sense of efficiency; it may be the sense of humour. I have at home a set of caricatures, published during the war, taken from the Munich comic paper *Simplicissimus*; and it is astonishing how the artists, who were guided only by their sense of humour, there gave a plain and sensible account of the German Emperor towards the end of the period before the war. The subconscious process of gathering new thoughts leads not only towards beauty and happiness, but towards that quality which one can describe but perhaps not define as truth. That is what Shelley meant when he said: "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world." Shelley, by allowing himself to brood with the full force of his poetic

imagination, by toiling and striving to know and then waiting humbly till the conviction came upon him, saw more of the significance of what was happening in the world than nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand of those who had taken a more direct part in events. If you ask why it was that the great introduction of mechanical industry and the transformation of human life in Great Britain which began towards the end of the eighteenth century did not produce worse disaster than it did, you will find it is very largely because there were certain men who had the poetic inspiration; and who were able to see and to communicate the significance of what was happening.

Turn again to Shelley's *Defence of Poetry*—and I think every teacher ought to read it. He says “We have more moral, political and historical wisdom than we know how to reduce into practice; we have more scientific and economical knowledge than can be accommodated to the just distribution of the produce which it multiplies . . . To what but a cultivation of the mechanical arts in a degree disproportioned to the presence of the creative faculty which is the basis of all knowledge, is to be attributed the abuse of all invention for abridging and combining labour, to the exasperation of the inequality of mankind?”

If that is so, if men can by a period of severe conscientious preparation followed by a period of rest in which the subconscious mind is guided by its emotions, produce new thoughts, what lesson does that fact hold for us as teachers?

From what I have to say on this practical side, you may, I believe, gather some hints both as to the arrangement and the occupation of time by the teacher and the taught, and as to the best method of stimulating the very difficult process of indirect as compared with direct mental effort.

The first point I would suggest is that it becomes extremely important, if we are to help real intellectual creation, that there should be a definite break between the conscious effort of attaining and understanding and remembering and the moment of creation. An extraordinarily able graduate student of mine in London University, a girl whose whole

life had been a succession up to that point of scholarships and fellowships, told me how much she had suffered by the fact that there had been no break between the preparation for one scholarship and the preparation for another, in which she could collect her soul. The American system of taking as a necessary part of a teacher's life a Sabbatical term or year from time to time in which the effort of thought might realize itself in creation is a very wise and important new discovery.

But if the teacher needs this, what about the taught? If you will look through the *Dictionary of National Biography* and try to find out the educational history of the really great creative intellects of England during, say, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, you will continually find that they had by some fortunate accident breaks in their school lives. They were kept at home to wander about a park or a house with an old library. They left one school as unsatisfactory, and had a break, as Darwin did, before going to another school. Very often they had, round about sixteen or seventeen, a period of prolonged ill-health. And if you look at their history after their school life you will see that they constantly depended upon some accident, which produced a period in which the necessity for constant, conscious intellectual effort was suspended. Both Wallace and Darwin had the sudden flash which led to the theory of evolution during a period of ill-health—Wallace when he was in bed with fever. Newton was wise enough, when he felt that creation was going to begin with him, to go to bed, although he was perfectly well. And those of us who look to the Bishop of London for guidance by new thoughts read with some apprehension his statement, after a long description of the entries in his Diary up to next January, that they might justify the remark of a kindly man of the world, "Why, Bishop, you live the life of a dog."

I think students and teachers might also take to heart a statement of Huxley's, in which he warns people against what he calls book-gluttony and lesson-bibbing. He says that, if we can avoid that danger, the next crop of thought will certainly be more full in the ear and the weeds fewer than

if we fall into it. I have sometimes asked why the people of India are so discontented with their present method of education, why there has been so little apparently successful result, and then I always remember that Lord Macaulay, who invented that method, took with him on the long sea-voyage to India the whole of the ancient classics, and sat down and read them through, thereby preventing his subconscious self from having a chance at any moment of the voyage. Those of you who have read the life of Mrs. Gladstone may remember a fact which to me explains certain qualities in Gladstone's mind which have always exasperated me. Gladstone and Lord Lytton, who were the two show products of Eton and Oxford, married two most delightful and witty heiresses. They determined to have a honeymoon of four. They went up to Scotland, travelling by the very inefficient railways of that time, and were left sometimes for one and a half or two hours at country railway stations. When that happened the two young men took out little Oxford editions of the classics from their pockets and had two hours of steady reading, leaving the two girls to bore each other.

The next point is for both the teacher and the taught. Rest when it comes must be real rest, for your subconscious as well as for your conscious mind. If you tell a man to rest, and at the same time put him in a position where his mind must strike like a clock at 11.15 to do some particular all-important thing, the subconscious mind will be worrying about that instead of doing any exploring. I sometimes wonder if it is not a great mistake, particularly in the University of Cambridge, to put upon college tutors the duty of filling up forms, of seeing that notices are sent in, of ten thousand little administrative duties which in the University of London we leave to the extremely competent professional ladies who sit in our central and local offices.

Again, I sometimes wonder, when I hear eloquent appeals for the introduction into England of the self-governing school and the self-governing university, on the lines I am familiar with in America, whether, if you take a clever girl

'with an inventive mind, propose her as a member of a committee, and make her whole future depend on being elected, while she is at the same time doing innumerable pieces of administrative work during her moments of leisure, you are really helping the creation of new thought in your country. You may find a significant warning in the Government report on the education of boys and girls issued the other day—a warning against its being assumed that the habit of filling up with some administrative or other job every moment of leisure is as suitable for girls as it is argued that it is suitable for boys.

When I left Oxford, I was attached to a big preparatory school, having the scholarship class. It was my duty to train the boys likely to get scholarships. I used to find that while you did not want very long hours, you wanted to secure that they knew how to work hard during those hours. But it was essential that they should not be worried out of school hours, and I had to make a sort of arrangement with the other masters that if anybody had a complaint to make of the boys in the scholarship class, he should come to me and I would scold them, so that he should not sterilize the boys' minds by giving them impositions and keeping them in. You want somehow or other to secure that such a boy shall have a period of real leisure, such as William Morris had when he was at Marlborough, when Marlborough was not a well-organized school and he could wander about among the woods.

The next point I would urge is that girls and boys in a modern school should be made aware of the existence of other efforts than the mere effort of attention, and the mere effort of memorizing. When Professor Macnamara sent round a questionnaire in the American manner to a very large number of colleges, he found that nine-tenths of the college students, when asked to define study, defined it as memorizing. I believe it is quite urgent that the children and the teachers in our schools should know what some other mental processes than attention and memorizing and understanding are like. The text-books of psychology, directly they pass from

the simpler to the more elusive processes of the mind, become in almost every case entirely useless. The best descriptions of the process are given by the poets and by some great poetic philosophers like Plato. Robert Graves in one of the volumes of Georgian Poetry describes the coming of poetic thought. He says

When a dream is born in you  
 With a sudden clamorous pain,  
 When you know the dream is true  
 And lovely, with no flaw nor stain,  
 O then, be careful, or with sudden clutch  
 You'll hurt the delicate thing you prize so much

Dreams are like a bird that mocks,  
 Flirting the feathers of his tail  
 When you seize at the salt-box  
 Over the hedge you'll see him sail  
 Old birds are neither caught with salt nor chaff.  
 They watch you from the apple bough and laugh

Poet, never chase the dream  
 Laugh yourself and turn away.  
 Mask your hunger, let it seem  
 Small matter if he come or stay;  
 But when he nestles in your hand at last,  
 Close up your fingers tight and hold him fast.\*

That process of knowing when an idea is coming, recognizing it while it is still wordless, and trying to get it into words, is a process which every child ought to learn about at school. I have inquired on that matter from my own post-graduate students, and in some cases have received extraordinarily interesting accounts from them as to the slow recognition in themselves of what some of them call the emotional stimulus, the feeling that a thought is coming, which presents itself generally in the form of an emotion. In one case, that of a very distinguished Indian student, the

\* Cf *The Art of Thought*, p 103. (Ed)

process came mainly from my urging him to write in his own language instead of English. In another case, a man, himself a teacher; whom I was attempting to assist in doing a thesis, found it extremely difficult, till at last he began to talk, and I suddenly stopped him in the middle of a sentence and said, "Put that down." He sat there gasping and saying, "Yes, yes." He put it down, and suddenly discovered that in conversation he had tapped a subconscious process which would not come when he sat with his pen in his hand. I remember a turning-point in the history of one of my best students when I praised a phrase of his in the section of his thesis which he had written for me, and he said, "Oh, I am so glad. That came to me in the middle of the night, and I thought you would like it." He found a new idea in the effort of verbal expression. I wonder whether we are wrong in having abandoned so completely as we have the "Declamation," the old school practice of delivering prepared speeches on particular points.

If you want to help this indirect process, I think you can also do so by trying to understand the connection in the process of creation between emotion and thought. In a book with a large circulation in America called *How to Use Your Mind*, the author, Professor Kitson, says, "As you look up the words of a foreign language in the lexicon, try to memorize their English equivalent."\* I believe that to be absolutely fatal. If you desire a foreign language to sprout and create new thoughts in your students, you must try, instead of memorizing the English equivalents, to get direct emotion from the foreign words themselves. I used to find with the little boys who came to me to learn Greek, that I had first to get them out of the habit of preparing long strips of paper with the Greek words and their English equivalents. I tore all these up and attempted at once to make the Greek word mean something to them. After they had translated it I made them read it with the proper emphasis themselves, trying to make them laugh at a Greek joke of Aristophanes,

\* H. D. Kitson, *How to use your Mind*. (1916), p. 72. See *The Art of Thought*, p. 250. (Ed.)

or have a little catch in their throat at a Greek speech out of Euripides.

There is, as I have said, very little about the subtler processes of the mind either in the psychological books or in such books on education as either the teachers or students will read. In the main, knowledge of these processes comes from accident; you will find constantly, in people's educational history, that it is due to meeting some teacher or friend who is doing some intellectual work of his own. I remember myself a complete intellectual change which came over me when I found myself the head of a house in Shrewsbury School, and Mr. Gilkes (afterwards Head of Dulwich) came as a young master and used to read Aristotle with me. The first notion that there was a way of using your mind which was right, and another way which was wrong, came to me then, and was very severely rubbed into me later on when I came under the formidable tuition of my friend Mr. Bernard Shaw.

We can, again, learn something from the teaching of the arts. One of the most valuable and important experiments which the English people have ever made in education—an experiment whose value consisted mainly in the entirely negative quality of its results—was the foundation of the South Kensington School of Art. The directors were mainly retired engineer officers who had never painted a picture, or at any rate never sold a picture; and their pupils became teachers, who never intended to sell a picture, but were set to teach pupils who might later on sell pictures. The inspiration of craftsman's knowledge died on the way down that long series.

It seems to me that, just as now in the new South Kensington, professors are rather expected, if they are going to teach the painting of pictures, themselves to paint real pictures, so it might not be unwise, if those who teach, for instance, English literature, would make a point of occasionally trying to produce something themselves. I think if I were teaching English poetry in a school, that if I had tried to create a poem which the *South Wiltshire Gazette* would

insert for nothing (whether I had failed to get it inserted anonymously or had succeeded) my teaching would be more helpful to any future poet in the class than if I had not made the attempt.

I end by asking you to consider for yourselves the relation between all this and your own professional organizations. I have myself seen the beginning and the extraordinarily rapid, and in many ways extraordinarily useful, growth of the professional organizations of teachers. I saw, as a member of the School Board, the growth of the great National Union of Teachers. It is quite clear that that growth is going rapidly forward, and you continually hear prophecies as to the future organization of a close self-governing profession of teaching, which is to have the same power and the same control over its functions as has the great profession of the law. I ask you to think of the relation between that future and that which Mr. Graves called the Salt Box, the difficult, subtle, indirect processes by which man can induce his mind to produce certain kinds of valuable results. Perhaps the Society of Authors, which helps the helpless author to secure a fair reward for his work, may have something to teach the organization of teachers. The Society of Authors never attempts to exclude anybody from becoming an author, never attempts to secure that a man will remain an author all his life, makes no attempt whatsoever to distinguish between the author and the rest of the citizens. If you create an organization which will make a life-long separation between the teacher and the other groups of mental producers, which will make it as difficult to enter or leave the teaching profession as it is to enter or leave the clerical or legal profession, it may be that, in the process of organization, the most valuable part of your own work may somehow be lost.

## PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE (1930)\*

MAY I BEGIN by expressing my thanks to those who have asked a student of social, or, as it used to be called, "moral" science, to deliver a lecture founded in honour of one of the greatest of natural scientists?

Ever since the systematic organization of experimental science began in the seventeenth century we moralists have been the weak and you physicists the strong branch of our family. The events of 1914-18 emphasized this fact more clearly than ever; the statesmen and social scientists and moral and religious teachers of Europe had assigned to them as their main duty the preservation of peace, and they failed utterly; the directors and inventors of the physical sciences had assigned to them as their main duty the killing of as many of the national enemies as possible, and they succeeded magnificently. Twenty years hence, the same situation may recur, and, unless the two disciplines can meanwhile come to an understanding, half the population, and all the accumulated wealth of Europe, may be destroyed with even more complete efficiency.

During the eighteenth century, when the physical discoveries of Newton and Lavoisier were already seen against a social background of war, and revolution, and religious confusion, some social thinkers had proposed that the weaker discipline should adopt the methods of the stronger. Bentham, for instance, wrote that all his work "on the subject of legislation or any other branch of moral science" was "an attempt to extend the experimental method of reasoning from the physical branch to the moral," and that "what

\* The Huxley Memorial Lecture, delivered at the Imperial College of Science and Technology in 1930. (Ed.)

Bacon was to the physical world Helvetius was to the moral.”

In England, the home of the Royal Society, and soon to be the workshop of the world, this proposal was more widely accepted than elsewhere. In 1840 Bentham’s disciple, John Stuart Mill, published his *Logic*, which was still the recognized text-book of that science when, forty years later, I read philosophy at Oxford. In his preliminary synopsis Mill said: “The backward state of the Moral Sciences can ‘only be remedied by applying to them the methods of Physical Science, duly extended and generalized.’” In the chapters on “The Logic of the Moral Sciences,” he explained that the particular natural science whose method he believed to be most applicable to the moral sciences was Physics, and that the perfect model of physical method was astronomy.

“The causes or forces,” said Mill, with no presentiment of Planck or Einstein, “on which astronomical phenomena depend, are fewer in number than those which determine any other of the great phenomena of nature” (Vol. II, p. 450); and astronomy “has become an exact science, because its phenomena have been brought under laws comprehending the whole of the causes by which the phenomena are influenced, whether in a great or only in a trifling degree, whether in all or only in some cases, and assigning to each of those causes the share of effect which really belongs to it” (*ibid.*, p. 432).

Mill argued that in astronomy, as in the social sciences, deliberately contrived experiment was impracticable, and that its place had to be taken by an analysis of complex events leading to the discovery of the primary underlying laws, and to the testing of the calculated combined effect of those laws by further observation. Mill distinguished this “physical” method from the “chemical” method, which, he said, proceeded by direct empirical induction from the observation of complex events resulting from still unknown primary laws. A chemist, Mill said, cannot deduce the properties of water from those of hydrogen and oxygen, or

\* See Elie Halévy, *La formation du Radicalisme Philosophique*, Vol. I, pp. 289–90.

the properties of muscles and nerves from those of "hydrogen, oxygen, carbon and azote." He is therefore compelled to treat water or muscle (as Macaulay, according to Mill, treated the working of the British Constitution) as an unanalysed fact. On the other hand, the social scientist who uses the physical method knows that "human beings in society have no properties but those which are derived from, and may be resolved into, the laws of the nature of individual man."\* The combination of primary psychological laws provided the social scientist with his secondary social laws. Mill divided these secondary laws into "static" laws, which controlled immediate social events, and "dynamic" laws, which controlled the succession in time of forms of human culture. The laws of political economy would, therefore, belong to Social Statics; and Mill takes as an instance of Social Dynamics Comte's "law of the progress of human knowledge" through the three stages "theological," "metaphysical" and "positive." "This generalization," says Mill, "appears to me to have that high degree of scientific evidence, which is derived from the concurrence of the indications of history with the probabilities derived from the constitution of the human mind" (*ibid.*, p. 528).

We all know that Mill's hopes of a society reconstructed by the method of Newtonian physics have been disappointed. Social events have obstinately refused to follow the path predicted by the laws of nineteenth-century political economy; and few economists outside Moscow now speak with certainty of any economic laws. Hardly anyone except the specialist historians of social thought even remembers Comte's laws of culture-succession, or Herbert Spencer's law of necessary social evolution from the military to the contractual type. And in modern anthropology the *diffusionist* theory that the succession of similar cultures in different regions has been mainly due to the diffusion of inventions seems to be winning against the attempt of the *evolutionists* to deduce general anthropological laws from prehistoric evidence.

Does this mean that the social and natural sciences have

\* *Logic*, Vol. II, p. 469

now nothing to learn from each other? In attempting to answer that question, one has first to recognize that Mill formed his main conception of the methods of physical science neither from first-hand experience of scientific work nor even at second-hand from the writings of Faraday or Herschel, but at third-hand from a treatise by that omniscient amateur, Dr. William Whewell. "Without the aid," he says, "derived from the facts and ideas contained in that gentleman's *History of the Inductive Sciences*, the corresponding portion of this work would probably not have been written"\*. In that respect Mill's experience offers a useful warning to social students like myself, when we are tempted to talk about the methods of natural science, and at least makes us grateful that Professor Eddington, Sir James Jeans, and other first-hand natural scientists are now well able to explain their own methods in language understood by the laity. From their books we learn that the distinction between physical and chemical methods has disappeared. Newton's billiard-ball atom has gone, and with it the distinction between force and matter. Even more significant to us is the fact that biologists like Huxley's distinguished grandson speak of their increasing difficulty in distinguishing between life and non-life. In this new world, physicists, like economists, are apparently beginning to be cautious about using the word "law." Professor Eddington tells us in his *Nature of the Physical World* that: "It now seems clear that we have not yet got hold of *any* primary law—that all those laws at one time supposed to be primary are in reality statistical. . . . In the reconstructed world nothing is impossible, though many things are improbable" (p. 98). Social and biological and physical students can now use the same text-books on statistical method. A Chancellor of the Exchequer, a Medical Officer of Health, a Life Insurance actuary, and an official of the Meteorological Office, now all work from statistical tables prepared and revised by similar methods.

Meanwhile the biologists are demonstrating the continuity of life throughout the animal world, and the psycho-

\* *Logic*, Vol. I, p. viii.

logists are breaking down the division between thought and other forms of conscious activity. Every year the separation of the human consciousness which thinks and feels and wills and values from the world with which it is in contact becomes less complete. Köhler and Koffka have pointed out that in the recognition of a *Gestalt*, or significant situation, by apes and young children, thought and emotion are indistinguishable; just as Shelley declared a hundred years ago that in the creative process which he called poetry we are compelled "to feel that which we perceive, and to imagine that which we know. . . . It is that," he says, "which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred."\* For the social student this tendency to unify the emotional and intellectual processes of creative thought is of vital importance. In the present crisis of twentieth-century society our duty is to invent patterns of social behaviour which men may choose to follow, rather than merely to discover laws of social behaviour which they must inevitably follow. And in the invention of social patterns, as in the creation of a work of art, the emotion of significance is one of the conditions which make intellectual fertility possible.

As I have illustrated the problem of method in social science from Mill's *Logic*, so I may illustrate this relation between science and emotion from his *Autobiography*. In his mental crisis of 1826, Mill found that he no longer cared intensely for that "greatest happiness of the greatest number" which had hitherto been the end aimed at by all his thought. After a period of despair, in which he felt himself to possess "a well-equipped ship and a rudder but no sail,"† he undertook, by the reading of poetry, by his friendship with Mrs. Taylor, and by other means, the deliberate "cultivation of the feelings" in order to reach and maintain "a due balance among the faculties" (*ibid.*, p. 122). And this "balance among the faculties," this new sense of the reality of love and hope, must have helped to free Mill from that crude determinism which seemed so inevitable an aspect of the Newtonian universe,

\* *Defence of Poetry*, 1821.

† *Autobiography*, World's Classics, pp. 117-18.

from "the doctrine," he says, "of what is called philosophical necessity, [which] weighed on my existence like an incubus."\*

Unfortunately, Mill never saw that the due balance among the faculties was a condition of success in logical thought as well as in other forms of human behaviour. He separated the chapters of his *Logic* on the method of the Moral Sciences, the cultivation of feeling as an *art* from the process of reasoning as a *science*. "The cultivation of feeling" is, he says, "properly a portion of the art corresponding to the science of human nature and society" (II, 546). When M. Lévy-Bruhl the other day separated, like Mill, ethics from science, and called ethics a "rational art," Mr. M. R. Cohen well asked: "Is not all scientific reasoning a rational art?"† And that rational art must include, not only the fully conscious processes of formal inductive or deductive logic, but also the subconscious process of brooding incubation which precedes the birth of a creative idea, and in which, because it is subconscious, the deliberate separation of emotion from rationalization is impossible.

In this respect, Bentham, like many other great men, was not a hundred-per-cent type-specimen of the tendencies associated with his name. Just as Cobden was not a complete Cobdenite, nor Adam Smith a complete partisan of "Smithianismus," so Bentham was not the passionless logic-machine which most writers mean by the word Benthamite. In his *Chrestomathia* Bentham said: "As between art and science, in the whole field of thought and action, no one spot will be found belonging to either to the exclusion of the other,"‡ and again, "There is, or rather there ought to be, a logic of the will, as well as of the understanding: the operations of the former faculty are neither less susceptible nor less worthy than those of the latter of being delineated by rules. . . . So far as a difference can be assigned between branches so intimately connected, whatever difference there is, in point of importance, is in favour of the logic of the will: since it is

\* *Autobiography*, p. 143.

† Ogburn, *Social Science and Natural Science*, p. 448.

‡ Works, Bowring's edition, Vol. VIII, p. 27.

only by their capacity of directing the operations of the faculty, that the operations of the understanding are of any consequence" (*ibid.*, I, iv).

I believe that in the lifetime of the generation now growing up an increasing recognition of this unity in diversity of the processes of the human mind may profoundly change both the science and the practice of social and political organization. But to-day I shall confine myself to the possible influence of that recognition on a single problem which concerns both physical and social students—the academic organization of student-research.

During the years when the nineteenth-century sociologists were making their confident and unsuccessful attempt to discover social laws as simple and as inevitable as those of Newtonian physics, the German professors of history had been learning from the natural scientists the humbler lesson that the social scientist should be as careful and exact in collecting the first-hand material of his thought as the physical scientist. In the eighteen-sixties the idea of first-hand research in the moral sciences had already reached Oxford; Mark Pattison in 1861 described the German historian Pauli as a "writer of painstaking research, who goes . . . to original and documentary authorities,"\* and in 1867 even the non-resident members of Oxford Convocation became aware of the movement, and refused to re-elect to his professorship Thorold Rogers, the pioneer of original research in English economic history.

Contact with first-hand material may aid physical and social thought alike, not only by providing material for analysis, but also by its influence on emotion and character. When the great pathologist Rudolph Virchow delivered the first Huxley Lecture in 1898, he took Huxley as an example showing "how great the value of personal observation is for the development of independent and unprejudiced thought. For a young man who, besides collecting a rich treasure of positive knowledge, has practised dissection and the exercise of a critical judgment, a long sea-voyage and a peaceful

\* *Essays*, 1889, Vol. I, p. 30.

sojourn among entirely new surroundings afford an in-valuable opportunity for original work and deep reflection. Freed from the formalism of the schools, thrown upon the use of his own intellect, compelled to test each single object as regards properties and history, he soon forgets the dogmas of the prevailing system and becomes, first a sceptic, and then an investigator." "This change," said Virchow, "which did not fail to affect Huxley, and through which arose that Huxley whom we commemorate to-day, is no unknown occurrence to one who is acquainted with the history, not only of knowledge, but also of scholars."\* As a student of social science, I recognize the good fortune which sent me at the beginning of my own studies for a long, though infinitely less important, voyage of exploration among the vast first-hand correspondence and diaries of Francis Place, the tailor and thinker who helped to found our university, and who gave us, in his great-grandson Sir Henry Miers, one of the best of our Principals. I came out from my years of research a different man; and I do not find it easy to separate my emotional from my intellectual changes in those years.

Huxley himself often spoke of the importance of emotion to the success of intellectual work. "Nothing great in science," he said, "has ever been done by men, whatever their powers, in whom the divine afflatus of the truth-seeker was wanting."† And again in his Aberdeen Rectorial address: "In an ideal university . . . the very air [the student] breathes should be charged with that enthusiasm for truth, that fanaticism for veracity, which is a greater possession than much learning" (*ibid.*, III, 204). The material handled by a young physical or social student may be as different as you will, but the professor who encourages either of them to undertake a piece of original research is beginning a psychological experiment on a human being, who, whether he takes his degree in science or in arts, has all the emotional and intellectual possibilities and limitations of our species.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century the triumphs of German research had a greater and more

\* *Life of T. H. Huxley*, Vol. I, p. 55.

† *Essays*, Vol. I, p. 56.

immediate effect on academic methods in America than in Great Britain; and it was largely because of American persuasion that London University, where research had already been encouraged by the higher degrees of Master and Doctor, added in 1920 the Ph.D research degree. Since then we have often, in our official documents, pointed out the splendid opportunities for research to be found in the Libraries and Museums and administrative and commercial centres of London, and in the physical and biological and ethnological and social resources of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

In the development of London as a great, and ultimately perhaps the greatest, Research University we have been most generously aided by American wealth; and that fact makes it, I believe, all the more necessary that we should attend to the warnings of certain American critics who look at the process of academic research in its relation, as Virchow said, to the scholar himself as well as to the scholar's knowledge. I will take, as one instance, a passage written, shortly before his lamented death in London, by the admirable American economist Professor Allyn Young. "Whatever," he says, "the degree of perfection to which we have brought our methods of investigation, however conscientiously we try to conduct our inquiries so that our findings shall be impartial and objective, we have to proceed in the direction in which our interests and our questioning minds lead us, and we have to rely upon the subtle and obscure processes by which new hypotheses, new perceptions of possible relations among things, build themselves up in our minds as we bring new materials under survey."<sup>\*</sup>

How are we to stimulate and direct these "subtle and obscure" psychological processes, when a student asks us to accept him as a candidate for a research degree? We can issue our commands, and enforce them by academic discipline and rewards, but all men who have done creative work have told us how difficult it is to be intellectually fertile to order. When the young Bentham was urged by his father

\* *Research in the Social Sciences*, ed. W. Gee, 1929, p. 66.

to work with a will not at the general principles of an ideal jurisprudence but at the intricacies of the existing Common Law he answered: "The will is here out of the question. Whatever may be the case with others, I find it impossible to bring the powers of invention to a mechanical obedience to the good pleasure of that faculty. . . . I am in this respect like David: I can give no melody in my heaviness."<sup>\*</sup> And as men cannot always think to order, so they cannot always feel to order. We can command a young student to learn a passage in a book by heart and test him by hearing him repeat it; we can command him to copy out pages or collect quotations, and test his industry and accuracy. We must choose other means to bring it about that he shall think new thoughts or feel new emotions, or indeed shall desire to do so. And in choosing our means we must rely upon experience, summed up in psychological laws which, as Eddington would say, are at best statistical; we shall indeed be lucky if those laws are even, as he puts it, "highly probable."

If we attempt to discover such laws by reading the biographies of original thinkers in the past, we find that many of them have toiled as Huxley himself toiled, with little or no help or direction except from the reading of books and the observation of nature. Others have received personal help from thinkers older than themselves, and that help has often taken the form of permission to assist the master in his own more mature work. So Aristotle worked with Plato, and Faraday with Davy, and so Mill, as a young man of nineteen, helped Bentham with the preparation of his great *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*. Each apprentice absorbed the intellectual methods of his master, and less consciously his master's passion, until that breach of fellowship came which is often the price which men must pay for original thought. So also Raphael worked in the studio of Perugino, and Fabritius in that of Rembrandt, if only at first as grinders of colours or painters of drapery. The seminary methods of the mid-nineteenth century German professors, Helmholtz, Wundt, and the rest, represented an attempt to extend and

\* Halévy, *Radicalisme Philosophique*, Vol. I, p. 297.

systematize this kind of apprenticeship; and the research tradition of American and English universities has been handed on from them.

But, meanwhile, the conditions of co-operation in intellectual work have been affected by the causes which during the last half-century have revolutionized all other forms of human co-operation. The mere change of scale has been an important element in that revolution. The hundreds of research students in the university laboratories of Berlin or Harvard, or the scores in the laboratories of a British university, must have a different emotional and intellectual relation to their professors from the relation of Faraday to Davy among the hand-made apparatus in the tiny laboratory of the Royal Institution, or that between Mommsen and Wundt and their early post-graduate students. A professor who has to recommend fifty or twenty new subjects of research a year to post-graduate students is in a different intellectual and emotional relation to those students from that of Davy when he discussed his pet problems of magnetism with Faraday, or of Manson when he confided to Ross his suspicions about mosquitoes and malaria. And in modern intellectual work, as in modern industry, the development of technique has compelled a constantly widening separation between the apprentice and the assistant. Raphael would have acquired little of Perugino's skill or passion if he had been sent to help the preparation of Perugino's colours in an efficient modern factory. To be a computer in the Greenwich Observatory or an indexer in the British Museum Library is not the best way to become an astronomer or a historian.

What then should we do? In the first place, we must realize that large-scale academic research, either in physical or social science, is a new experiment, in which we should watch for every indication of success or failure. It would, indeed, be well if the League of Nations "Committee on Intellectual Co-operation" would start a world-wide scheme of research on the effects of research-methods. Success seems largely to depend, first on the choice of subjects, and next on the relation of the teacher to the student. In the choice of

subjects we have to compromise between the needs of the subject and the needs of the student. No student should be meticulous in avoiding the kind of contact with first-hand material which may involve a good deal of dull drudgery. But the knowledge which a science most urgently needs may be best obtainable by methods which a skilled assistant can use successfully, but which an apprentice thinker cannot use so well, and from using which he will learn little or nothing. A machine, sorting the pierced cards of a census return can to-day produce invaluable new knowledge, the gathering of which would once have required all the imagination and ingenuity and passion for truth of an Aristotle or a Sir William Petty. Most universities would be wise to increase their supply both of computing machines and skilled computers, but some Americans already complain that "adding-machine research," however valuable for the progress of science, is an unwise form of training for economic thinkers.

More promising is the proposal that the subject chosen should be part of an organized scheme of "teamwork." Yet, even here, the needs of the student and of his future life-work may be sacrificed to the immediate needs of the science. The members of such a team may stimulate each other personally and emotionally, and therefore intellectually. But they may not; and if I were told to look for the research student who was most like Bentham in his inability "to make melody in his heaviness" I should expect to find him a disappointed member of such a team, who had not, like Bentham, the means of escape provided by a small independent income. May I again, on this point, quote Professor Allyn Young? "Industry," he says, "fortunately is not an uncommon virtue. Technique may be acquired. But imagination, and especially the kind of imagination that keeps its moorings, is rare. That is one reason why we ought to put our emphasis upon the individual investigator rather than upon a fixed programme of research, why we should try to make it possible for the man with ideas to do the particular things he wants to do rather than the things we want to see done."\*

\* *Research in the Social Sciences*, p. 67.

And when the time of the student is wasted, the time of the professor, which may be at least equally important for science, is wasted also.

As to the relation of an academic teacher to his research students, it is obviously desirable that no professor shall have too many students or too little leisure to give personal attention and advice to each, as well as to continue his own work. And it is also desirable that the teacher should himself be clear about his own share in what must necessarily be a joint effort. Men instinctively desire an economy of labour, and it is difficult for a busy professor, who sees a post-graduate student fumbling over a promising and useful bit of research, not to do all his essential thinking for him.

Another problem before the professor is the stimulation or repression of "feeling" in his student. That problem is, I suppose, more urgent in the social than in the natural sciences. During the last twenty years, social science students and ex-students have sometimes told me that they have been warned not, while collecting and arranging their material, to allow themselves to be influenced by their feelings. But feelings are of many different kinds. Students may be wisely told not to allow their reasoning to be distorted by political or personal partisanship. They are perhaps not so often told to avoid intellectual distortion by their desire to get a degree. But an English professor, with his national habit of emotional shyness, finds it difficult to communicate in words Huxley's lesson that no good work can be done without a passionate "fanaticism of veracity." Example indeed in that respect may, if circumstances allow the professor to come into real contact with his student, be more effective than precept. Huxley, again, once said: "Science and literature are not two things but two sides of one thing,"\* and that saying indicates another method of stimulating indirectly the scientific passion which it is so hard to stimulate directly. A student whose imagination has perhaps been sent to sleep by too many undergraduate lectures and examinations may be aroused to a new kind of activity of the soul if

\* *Essays*, Vol. IX, p. 171.

He tries to turn the flaccid summaries of his note-books into something which an ordinary newspaper critic would accept as decent literature.

Yet during the last ten years I have been slowly convinced that none of these expedients constitute a sufficient solution of our problem. I have become sure that it would be wise for those who are responsible for the academic organization of Great Britain to forget for a moment the traditions of degrees and courses, and to ask themselves afresh what are the needs of those students who continue their academic work after taking a first degree, and what are the best means of supplying those needs. A general lengthening of the British educational course is obviously taking place. A proportion of the population which is already increasing rapidly, and will soon increase much more rapidly, now receives secondary education, and a constantly growing number of the boys and girls who pass through the new secondary schools will need university education. And owing to the recent enormous accumulation and difficulty of the knowledge required by those who are to take a real part in the intellectual direction of their generation, an increasing number of those who take first degrees will need a further period of one or two or three years of academic training. As things are, the community, represented by public grants and private endowments, often says to these future staff-officers of civilization: "If you will spend your post-graduate years in work which can be classed as 'research,' and which in our London phrase 'forms a distinct contribution to the knowledge of the subject,' you will be aided by all our resources, and will carry for the rest of your life the honourable title of Doctor. If your work during those years cannot be so classified, you will find it rather difficult to get either academic help or academic recognition."

I am certain that this is an instance of Francis Bacon's saying that the subtlety of the human intellect too often fails to keep up with the subtlety of nature. Think, for an instant, of individual instances either in the past or the present. Aristotle's *Politics* might now be accepted as research-work.

His *Ethics*, or Plato's *Republic* would certainly not be accepted. A critical edition, with variorum notes, of Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*, or Bentham's *Principles of Morals and Legislation* would be research. The actual composition of those books, or of Bagehot's *Physics and Politics*, would not. A Life of George Chapman, however unimportant the facts discovered, would be research. The writing of Chapman's translation of Homer, though it profoundly influenced the whole direction of English poetry, was not research. Again, it may be essential for a young astronomer that he should spend the years from twenty-one to twenty-three in mastering the mathematics of Relativity or the Quantum theory. Such work would not produce "a distinct contribution to the knowledge of the subject," because that contribution has been already made by Einstein and Planck. But when Einstein dies, the collection of personal incidents in his life or misprints in his editions will be research.

London University has already arranged that a science course for a first degree may, according to the nature of the work undertaken, last for either three or four years. Could we not extend that principle? Could we not say to our own post-graduate students and to those who come to us from abroad: "If we find that you are sufficiently intelligent and prepared and keen, and that the course you propose is suited to your future life as a scientist we will help you to do either one or two or three years' work, which may or may not constitute an immediate addition to human knowledge. For such work we will give you an appropriate degree or diploma. Later on, when you are a mature thinker, with part of your life's production already done, we will, if you ask us, or if you accept our spontaneous offer, welcome you to the company of our full doctors."

I have no illusions as to the difficulty of such a policy. No one British University can act in such matters without consulting the others. And it is no easy task to classify, estimate, and reward with the prestige of our degrees work which must vary with individual needs and desires. Any rearrangement that is practicable must at best be an imperfect compromise.

#### MEN AND IDEAS

But we students of social science live in the strange new universe revealed to us by the natural scientists, and we have to watch the fleeting consciousness of short-lived men as it strives to create the idea of a society more permanent and more harmonious than our own. You may therefore sympathize if some of us feel strongly that any difficulty of administrative invention is a small thing, when compared with the danger that human thought may be hindered by our laborious attempts to encourage it

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